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No. 17.]

TRANSMISSION AT
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WEEK ENDING MAY 15, 1902.

ENTERED AT
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THE LANCET (May 27th, 1899) says: "The statement that Cadbury's Cocoa is an absolutely pure article cannot be controverted in view of the results of analysis which, in our hands, this excellent article of food has yielded."

Insist on having CADBURY'S (sold only in Packets and Tins), as other Cocoas are sometimes substituted for the sake of extra profit.

DELICATE MORSELS FOR PARTICULAR MORTALS HOMEWARD BISCUITS

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A Delightful Biscuit
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Every subscription of 9d. or more to the FRESH AIR FUND will be acknowledged on a pretty picture post-card. Read about this idea on the last page.



PEARSON'S

TO INTEREST
TO ELEVATE, TO AMUSE. WEEKLY.



No. 617.]

TRANSMISSION AT
BOOK STATIONERS.

WEEK ENDING MAY 15, 1902.

ENTERED AT
STATIONERS' HALL.

[ONE PENNY.]

Useful to Know.

"No," said the father to the principal of the cooking school, "I don't believe I'll send my daughter to your institution. I expect to be able to provide for her so that she shall not have to work in the kitchen after she is married."

"That's all very nice," said the principal, "but the most important part of our curriculum is that which instructs the young ladies how to manage the cook, and to discharge her, if necessary."

At this the father immediately wrote a cheque for the full term's tuition.

MRS. GABB: "Dear me! There comes my husband. There won't be whole piece of furniture left in the house by midnight."

Mrs. Gadd: "Horror! Does he drink, and is that a case of whisky he is carrying?"

Mrs. Gabb: "No, he doesn't drink. That's a new box of tools."

WIFE (to her husband): "Arthur, love, I want you to give John a good scolding to-morrow morning."

Husband: "What for? I am perfectly satisfied with the fellow."

Wife: "Well, you see, he has to beat the carpets to-morrow, and he strikes ever so much harder when he's in a bad temper."

A Wise Provision.

MR. SMOOTHFACE: "I have discovered that baldness is a wise provision of nature."

Philosopher: "That's a discovery, indeed."

"Yes. You have noticed, doubtless, that I am bald as a billiard-ball as far down as the rim of my hat, but below that the hair grows as luxuriantly as ever."

"Yes, that is usually the case."

"Exactly. Well now comes my discovery. Hair-dressers' shops are often draughty, you know."

"Very frequently."

"Draughts are always dangerous."

"Too true. Sure to give folks influenza, pneumonia, and I don't know what."

"That's it. Well, a bald-headed man can have his hair cut without removing his hat."

AMIALE TOURIST (to guide): "That's a very imposing statue, guide."

Guide: "Indeed you are right, sir; most people are imposed on by it. They think it's marble, but it's only painted timber."

SHE: "You say you would do anything for me, Charlie."

He (fervently): "I would, darling."

She: "Well, you know how frightfully red my hair is, I want you to dye yours red, just to keep me in countenance!"

To Freshen Tired Eyes.

WHEN reading, sewing, or doing anything that requires continuous use of the eyes, we should advise you to close the eyelids just for a second or two, now and again, open them, and then look off at a distance. Simple as this plan looks, it is what the muscles of the eye want, and practically ask you to do, as the momentary rest is beneficial for them and is invigorating.

It is wrong to work or read by twilight or dim light of any kind. Children fond of reading are addicted to this practice, and when grown up wonder why they are short-sighted. Whether young or old, do your reading or sewing with your back to a strong light, and never hold your book or work nearer to your eyes than is necessary for clear vision. At the first sign of departing day, leave off what you are doing and wait till it is time to light the gas.

Reading when lying down is bad, and it is also a great mistake to read when sleepy, as the optic muscles of accommodation and convergence are relaxed, and the effort you put on them brings about congestion of the blood-vessels of the eyeball.

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It Won Her.

She questioned him close, but no secret disclosed,

As they sat in the gloaming together,

About his past life, for the damsel proposed

With rare wisdom to ascertain, whether

He had habits or faults which in subsequent years

Might occasion her worry or sorrow;

But George he was cute, and allayed all her fears

And doubts for the coming to-morrow.

"Now, George, do you gamble?" the question came low

And distinct, that he might understand;

"No, Ethel, I don't; but I ought to just now,

For I'm holding a beautiful hand."

'Twas a triumph of genius, it can't be denied,

By mortals but rarely possessed;

She quietly gathered her sleeves to one side

And buried her head on his breast.

LADY (in registry office): "Have you ever minded children before?"

Nurse: "No, mum, but I've made many a child mind me."

Of Course She Would.

WIFE: "I have made ten pounds this afternoon."

Husband: "Phew!"

"You paid only twenty pounds for that old piano, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"Well, I have sold it for thirty."

"Gracious me! What are you going to do with the money?"

"There isn't any money."

"Eh?"

"I sold it to a dealer. He gives me a new piano for forty pounds, and allows me thirty for the old one. If you'd stay at home and let me go to your office and attend to your business, you'd soon be rich. Just think! Ten pounds a day is something over three thousand a year."

"REGINALD," she said, to a wealthy young dandy who had been paying his attentions to her. "I would like to ask you one very serious question."

"What is it, my dear?" he replied.

"Would you object to marry mamma if I refused you? You see, we really don't want to lose you."

Borrowing His Trousers.

A MINISTER was called to preach at a little chapel in a very remote country district, and as the place was a considerable distance from his home it was absolutely necessary that he should stay somewhere in the neighbourhood all night. A small farmer who, with his family, attended the chapel, volunteered to entertain the preacher, and so, at the close of the service, the latter repaired to the homestead. An early supper was served, and the household, as well as the guest, retired to rest.

On waking next morning the minister proceeded to dress, but operations were soon delayed because of the perplexing absence of his trousers, which, by the way, happened to be an entirely new pair. The preacher made diligent search in the bedroom, but no trace of the missing garment could be found. Relinquishing his vain quest, he summoned sufficient courage to open his bedroom door a little, and to call to the good woman of the house, whom he heard at work below.

"Mrs. Brown," he shouted, "do you know what has become of my trousers? I can't find them anywhere in my bedroom."

"But, Mr. James," was the response, "you are surely not thinking of getting up for a long time yet. My old man went off very early to the fair at the next town, and as his trousers happened to be rather poor, we thought you wouldn't mind if he borrowed yours. Just lie down comfortably till he gets back. I hope he won't be long."

The preacher had perforce to return to bed, and when about two hours had passed deliverance came.

What They Were Hawking.

AT an exhibition of paintings in Manchester, in one of the galleries hung the notable picture "Hawking in the Olden Times." An elderly farmer and his wife paused before this picture, viewing it with evident satisfaction.

"John," said the old lady, "what's that?"

John then turned over the leaves of the catalogue he carried.

"They call it 'Hawking' in the olden time," said he.

"Hawking! Why, what are they hawking?" she inquired.

"I dunno," he replied; "but I 'spect they're trying to sell them birds."

BILKINS: "How do do? Play ping-pong?"

Wilkins: "No."

Bilkins: "I'm sorry for you, old fellow. What on earth do you talk about when you meet people?"

A NUMBER of country neighbours are asking the wife of the village butcher what sort of person is the squire's newly married wife.

To these inquiries they receive the oracular, but none the less convincing reply:

"A puffed lady—she don't know one joint of meat from another!"

Same Girl—Same Fowl.

A COMMERCIAL traveller, dining at a country inn, ordered boiled chicken for his dinner. It was placed before him, and he tried in vain to make an incision with his knife and fork.

Turning to the girl who had waited on him, he said, "I was here five years ago, and ordered a chicken for dinner."

"Oh, yes," answered the girl flippantly, "I remember. It was I who waited on you."

"How strange—how very strange!" remarked the man in a low, awe-stricken tone.

"Why is it strange?" inquired the girl.

"It's more than strange, it's wonderful—such a coincidence could hardly happen twice—same girl, same chicken!" and he looked reverently at the specimen before him, while the girl made a hasty retreat.

"MISS ELWYN," said a little girl to her governess, "why do herrings have so many more diseases than other fish?"

"Do they, my dear?" said the lady gravely, looking over her spectacles.

"Yes, indeed, Miss Elwyn, because this book says that thousands upon thousands of them go to Yarmouth to be cured."

LADY (engaging servant): "Why did you leave your last place?"

Servant: "I couldn't put up with the way one of the young mistresses used to copy me, mum."

Lady: "What do you mean?"

Servant: "Why, I had a private soldier for my sweetheart, and what must she do but go and get a hoffer for hers!"

Are Your Nails Grooved?

If you take a careful glance at the fingers of certain people you will observe that the nails, instead of being smooth, are grooved or ribbed lengthwise from the business end to the quick. In some instances only one nail on each hand is thus marked, but in other cases all the nails have grooves.

This is a sign of bad health, and it is closely related to the mental condition of the possessor. When a doctor visits a patient and notes those ribbed nails, he may assume with confidence that the patient will have an acute attack of the malady from which he is suffering. This grooving is due to inability to properly assimilate food, which is provocative of disease.

In connection with the mental condition, these ribs denote fits of mental aberration, and the doctor can, after a little experience, tell how frequent and how severe those attacks are likely to be as soon as he sees the grooves in the nails.

"Chums of the Fifth," a clinking story of school and adventure, has not long started in THE BIG BUDGET. Don't miss this great story.



By Annie O. Tibbitts.

WHEN Miss Martin gave Jack Elton her photograph, he little thought that it was one of those trifles which sometimes go to make the tragedies of life.

He put it in his pocket—the thin, tired face of a middle-aged woman—close to another, which rested against his heart. That other was a bonny face—the face of the girl he loved, and he was quite unconscious, as he thrust it away, that the photograph of the older woman had taken the place of the younger.

"Well, you can tell her, Jack," said Miss Martin, "that I think you're a lucky man. I always liked Kitty Trevor. I knew her mother years ago, and somehow, when I saw you together, I hoped it would come to this. I'm glad of it, Jack."

Jack beamed. He and Miss Martin were good friends. She was not like the usual run of old maids. She had the good sense of a man, he often thought, and occasionally he found himself addressing her "my dear fellow."

"I'm glad you like her," he said. "I should have been sorry if you hadn't, and if you and she are good friends it will be jolly. I'll give her your photograph to-morrow."

He turned away whistling like a schoolboy, for the world was a peculiarly happy place to him just then. He was young, and not badly off, with good prospects—even without Miss Martin, who said she meant to leave him her money—and with the prettiest girl in the world for his promised wife. What more could a man want?

But Fate has a nasty way of playing a man a trick sometimes, and an hour or two later, as Jack turned into Pall Mall, Fate played him one.

He came face to face with a man who stood still when he saw him, and caught him by the arm.

"Jack Elton, as I live!" he cried.

Jack turned, and then held out his hand.

"Captain Riley!" he cried. "Why I haven't seen you for years—it must be five or six."

The captain nodded. He was a middle-aged man, tall and thin, and getting grey. Jack thought as he looked at him that knocking about the world didn't seem to agree with him, and then he remembered that he had disappeared from the club very suddenly five or six years ago, and wondered if there were anything in the rumour that there had been something wrong with him.

Captain Riley, however, did not look as though he had anything to hide, and when he suggested that Jack should turn in with him to the club and have a chat, Jack went.

"It's nearly six years," said the captain, "since I went away, and I suppose the world has changed a bit since then? What has happened to you?"

Jack's hand travelled quickly to his breast pocket.

"Everything," he said. "The best that could."

He drew out a photograph—the one nearest his heart, and held it for an instant in the palm of his hand, and his fingers closed round it as if it were a treasure.

"I'm—I'm going to be married," he said, hesitatingly, "to—to—her!"

He lifted up his hand abruptly with the photograph lying in the palm, and turned its face towards the captain without looking at it himself. His eyes were averted, and if Captain Riley had looked at him he might have been even more startled than he was.

As it was he fell back sharply, with a queer gasp for breath.

What he saw was a woman's thin face, with wavy dark hair parted in the middle, with lips grown bitter through disappointment, with eyes faded, perhaps with too much weeping. It was the photograph of Miss Martin!

His bronzed face grew grey.

"To marry—her!" he cried, huskily. "Good Heavens, man, you can't mean it!"

Jack drew back the photograph hastily, and thrust it into his pocket again.

"I mean it," he said, stiffly, "and why not?"

The captain stared at him. To him there was coming back a memory of past years—a memory of that same thin face when it had been happier and younger—a memory of it as he had seen it ten years ago, mocking and angry, and again as he had seen it only six years since, hard and determined, and he looked up.

"Well, I hope she'll treat you better than she treated me," he said, bitterly, and Jack started, and rose to his feet.

"Treated you?" he cried, hoarsely. "What do you mean?"

The captain laughed, and then his lips set.

"I mean," he said, steadily, "that I meant to marry her once, and I thought she meant to marry me, but it appeared she didn't. She altered her mind—she jilted me as I afterwards heard she had jilted a dozen

men before me. But you may have better luck. You're better looking than I was, and—and—"

Jack looked at him with his face growing red and hard.

"It is lie!" he burst out at last. "It must be a lie! It's impossible! Engaged to you—" He broke off with a bitter laugh, and then stared at the captain's bronzed face, realising suddenly that he was not such an old man after all—forty perhaps, that was all; and he had heard of girls being engaged to men older than themselves. Young girls liked middle-aged men sometimes, and Kitty was twenty-five. How did he know what had happened before he met her last summer? He had but known her twelve months. How did he know really whether she was the flirt Captain Riley called her or not?

He hesitated, and the captain rose also to his feet.

"You'd better go and ask her whether it is a lie or not," he said. "Ask her why I went away six years ago! Ask her—Oh, Heaven! Ask her if she didn't once swear with her arms round my neck that I was the only man she ever really cared for, and ask her if a month later she didn't bid me go where I would! Ask her—ask her! I suppose she's sworn the same thing to you!"

Jack stood still. He had only been engaged a week—only seven short days, and even as he stood there he could feel the touch of her arms again, and see her eyes looking into his—looking so true that a sudden passion seized him at the captain's words.

"It's a lie!" he cried. "But I'll ask her. I'll go now. She's true as steel—I'd stake my life on her."

The captain laughed again.

"I was ready to do it once," he cried, "and now I wish to goodness I'd never seen her. I wish to goodness I could forget her. She could lie a man's soul away I know, and yet, if I saw her again—I couldn't help it—I should love her still. And I've been round the world to forget her! Go, and ask her if she's forgotten me."

Jack strode away hastily, leaving Captain Riley looking after him. He fingered his wine-glass uneasily as he shut the door.

"To think of her getting hold of a boy like that," he muttered, "a boy like that!"

Jack went as rapidly as he could towards his fiancée's house, and when he was shown in to her, he strode forward impetuously, with his heart beating like a sledge hammer.

"Kit," he cried, huskily, "I want to ask you something. It's a lie, I know—it's almost an insult to ask you, but I've just seen a man—a Captain Riley—I met him in the street by accident, and he says—"

He hesitated. Kitty had given a little start, and a colour had sprung into her cheeks. She gave a quick, involuntary glance out of the window. How odd! Only an hour ago Miss Martin had been speaking of Captain Riley. If it should be the same! If she could manage somehow to patch up the quarrel of ten years' standing, that had been renewed six years ago, and had never been made up! If she—Kitty—could somehow heal the breach now!

She looked up at Jack with her lips parted.

"Captain Riley?" she cried, breathlessly.

Jack fell back.

"Then it's true," he cried, hoarsely, "and I called him a liar—I thought—I couldn't believe—"

"But what's true?" asked Kitty. "I don't understand."

Jack laughed bitterly. She had deceived a dozen men, Captain Riley had said. Who had been before him he wondered? The red lips that he had kissed only yesterday could lie a man's soul away—so Captain Riley had said. Who had she lied to before him?

He fell back still another step.

"How was it you never mentioned Captain Riley to me?" he asked, coldly.

Kitty looked bewildered.

"But I—I—I couldn't," she cried. "It wouldn't have been fair—oh, I couldn't. I might have told you later on perhaps, but, oh, you know I couldn't at once."

Jack turned on his heel.

"Well, if you can hide a thing like that, you can hide a dozen other worse things," he said in a harsh, hard voice.

"It's a good thing I found out before it was too late."

Kitty darted after him.

"But I don't understand," she cried, breathlessly.

He turned again. He saw her bright, girlish face, her eyes wide, and innocent as a child's, and he remembered the captain's words. "If she lied to me now—I couldn't help it—I should love her still."

His face hardened.

"I'm deceived in you—that's all," he said, unsteadily. "I thought—you were different—and I've made a mistake."

He turned and slammed the door behind him, and Kitty, dazed and stupid because she did not understand, stared blankly before her. He surely could not mean to go because she had not told him Miss Martin's love story? He must be mad!

His footsteps echoed on the pavement outside. He strode away quickly—back to the club, and the Fate that had thrown the captain across his path earlier in the day put him there again.

He was in a corner of the club reading a paper, and Jack strode up to him.

"I apologise," he said, abruptly. "I called you a liar this morning. Forgive me. You were right, after all."

The captain looked up. His lips were set.

"So you asked her?" he said in a low voice.

Jack nodded. His hand travelled to his breast-pocket. He took the photograph and threw it down on the table in front of the captain.

"I've done with her," he cried, savagely. "I—I—I've done with her."

He turned away unsteadily, and the captain picked up the photograph. He looked at it, then started to his feet.

"Here—I say, Elton, what's this?" he cried.

Jack looked round.

"I don't want it," he said. "Tear it up. I don't want to see her face again."

Captain Riley went hastily towards him.

"But this!" he cried. "This girl—what about her?"

Jack stared.

"I've ended it all," he said, "or I suppose I have. I never mean to see her again."

The captain shook the piece of cardboard in his face. "But this isn't Miss Martin!" he cried.

"Who said it was?" asked Jack.

The captain looked bewildered. Nobody had said it was, so far as he could recollect, and he looked up at Jack rather doubtfully—as if he were wondering if he were sober.

"But this isn't the girl you were engaged to, is it?" he asked.

"Of course!" said Jack.

Captain Riley thrust the photograph into his hands.

"Then take it back," he said. "It isn't the one I meant. I never saw her before in my life. The photograph you showed me this morning was the photograph of an older woman, of Miss Martin. There is a mistake somewhere."

There was, and when it was clear to him what he had done, Jack hurried once more to Kitty.

"I was an awful fool, Kitty," he said. "It might have spoilt both our lives. I don't deserve to be forgiven."

"No, you don't," said Kitty, "and I shan't do it again."

"You shall never have the chance," said Jack. "I shan't make such a mistake again."

"And what about Miss Martin?" Kitty asked presently. "Couldn't we—couldn't we manage somehow for her and Captain Riley to meet? You know she told me just now it was all her fault that he went away, and that he was the only man she ever really cared for."

Jack stared. They were the captain's very words—the words he thought Miss Martin had sworn falsely.

"And Jack she—she told me that she was an awful flirt, when she was younger, and that it drove him away. Then, six years ago, he came back, and she was foolish again! She thought he had heard of the money that had been left her, and had come back because of that, and so she would have nothing to do with him. And yet here they are, Jack, both fond of each other—oh, I'm sure we might do something if we liked."

Jack looked down at her eager face.

"Perhaps we might," he said. "Perhaps if they met—it might be all right."

And a little while afterwards it was. The woman whom Captain Riley had been all round the world to forget became his wife at last.

BOYS & GIRLS!

Thousands of Prizes for You!

HERE is a chance for thousands of you to secure a pencil-case, a penknife, or a book each, and two of you to each secure a brand new bicycle. All you have to do is to copy in black ink the title on the first cover page of *Pearson's Weekly*. Copies must be larger than the original on the cover, and the work must be done in school hours at the request of the master or mistress of your class. No ruling is allowed.

Similar headings were done by the boys of Nanstallon Board School, Bodmin. When the Government Inspector saw them he suggested to the master that they should be sent on to the Editor of *Pearson's Weekly*. The Editor sent a gold-plated pencil-case to the boy who had done the best heading, and now makes the above offer.

When the headings are done the teacher should collect them from the pupils and send them along in an envelope marked "BOY" or "GIRL" (as the case may be), to the Editor of *Pearson's Weekly*, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., together with a few lines certifying that the heading is in each case the unaided work of the competitor.

To the pupil in each school competing who sends in the most accurate drawing, a pencil-case, a penknife, or a book will be awarded, and to the boy and the girl whose attempt the Editor considers to be the best of all those sent in from all the schools will be presented a brand new bicycle (one bicycle for a boy, and one bicycle for a girl). Moreover, the teacher of each pupil who receives a bicycle will be presented with a cheque for £5.

Show this to your school teacher, and ask him or her to allow you and your schoolmates to enter for this competition. The number of copies of *Pearson's Weekly* required for the purpose of copying will be sent post free on receipt of a postcard, addressed to "Publisher, *Pearson's Weekly*, Henrietta Street, London, W.C."



It will probably be news to most people that there are still living in remote, and, for the most part, outlying portions of the British Isles, people whose dwelling places, and mode of life in general, are but very little removed from those of savages.

In many of the lesser-known Hebrides, for instance, the people are as much cut off from civilisation as are the Inuits, or the Congo dwarfs. Their homes are, so far as outward appearance goes, exactly like Kaffir huts; just rough heaps of stones a few feet high, surmounted by circular straw roofs. Chimneys, as a rule, are conspicuous by their absence, and the reek of the peat smoke fills each interior. Men, women, and children go barefoot, even in the depth of winter.

Whisk up the average stay-at-home Englishman, set him down suddenly among these strange folk, and then ask him to guess what part of the world he is in. He would probably name half a hundred outlandish places, in Asia, Africa, and America; but it is practically certain he would never once guess that he was on a British island. Even the language of the natives—Gaelic—would be quite unintelligible to him.

SAVAGES IN IRELAND.

Not, of course, be it understood, that these hardy fishermen are savages in the sense of being degraded, gluttonous, or cruel. On the contrary, they are a fine, healthy, hospitable race, and exceedingly religious and temperate. But it is doubtful if their standard of living is even up to that of many aboriginal tribes; and it is certain that they know, for the most part, quite as little of what is going on in the great world around them.

A similar remark applies to not a few remote islands off the west coast of Ireland, where may be studied primitive habits of life which have remained unaltered since the days of the semi-legendary Fírbolgs. The dwellings on many of these remote outposts of Britain do not even pretend to be weather-proof. They are merely rough, beach-stone built hovels, with thatched roofs tied on by stone-weighted wisps, and, of course, no chimneys. Men, women, and children, are all obliged to work at the fishing and in the fields.

In parts of Connemara, too, is preserved a curious custom, which is exactly akin to the summer migration of the savage Samoyeds and their reindeer. With the coming of spring the entire population of several villages will close their winter dwellings, tie their infant children on their backs, carry with them their shovels, some corn and potatoes, with a few pots and cooking utensils, drive their cattle before them, and migrate into the hills in search of fresh pasture for their flocks.

CORNISHMEN WORSHIP FLORA.

Arrived there they build mud huts, or summer-houses, of sods and wattles, and proceed to cultivate and sow with corn a few fertile spots in the neighbouring valleys. They remain thus for about two months of the spring and early summer, till the corn is sown. Then, their stocks of provisions being exhausted, and the pasture consumed by their cattle, they return to the shore, and eke out a precarious existence by fishing. No further attention is devoted to the crops, until they return to reap them in the autumn, in a manner similar to the spring migration.

The goddess Flora is worshipped annually on May Day, at Helston, in Cornwall, with much pomp, ceremony, and rejoicing. On the evening of the previous day practically the entire adult population sallies forth into the surrounding countryside for garlands and green branches, just as did the ancient Romans eighteen centuries ago. The main feature of the festival is a curious dance performed to a sprightly tune, said to be used also in Wales and in Brittany; and on "Flora Day," as it is locally termed, both doors of all houses are kept open, in order that the strings of dancers may pass through them at pleasure. For any householder to close his doors, would be to invite misfortune and ill-luck throughout the ensuing year.

Nearly all travellers in Central Africa have referred to the curious custom, prevalent among almost all pagan native tribes, of driving quantities of nails into sacred trees and other objects that have been adjudged worthy of veneration; and this not in malice, but as a religious rite, the nails in question being intended as votive offerings.

Exactly the same thing may be witnessed to-day at the sacred well of St. Maeburha, in Loch Maree, Ross-shire, where is an ancient oak tree studded with countless nails of all sizes, the offerings of invalid pilgrims who came to worship and be cured. Pennies and half-pennies, also, are to be seen in enormous quantities, driven edgeways into the tough bark; and a friend of

the writer's, who visited the spot some little time back, discovered in a cleft high up in the trunk what he took to be a shilling. On being extracted, however, it proved to be counterfeit. Probably the donor, finding that he could get no value for his coin in the natural world, concluded he might as well try, as a last resource, what effect it might have in the spiritual.

Of course, the poor cottars, and others who flock to St. Maeburha with their nails and their pence, do not for a moment admit that they are assisting at a pagan ceremony. But they most undoubtedly are. Well-worship has always occupied an important place in paganism; and the sacred oak, before which each pilgrim must thrice kneel ere humbly presenting his offering—what is it but an obvious survival of the sacred groves of druidical times? Similarly, the final rite, in which the patient is towed thrice round the island at the stern of a boat with the course of the sun, is clearly a custom derived from those distant days, when the adoration of that orb, the visible source of light and life, was the ordinary and obvious duty of those whom he benefited.

SCOTS BURY CATTLE ALIVE.

But these are harmless observances. There is a darker side to the picture. For instance, the cock has always played a prominent part in paganism the world over. In India, in Ceylon, in Hayti, he is to this day openly sacrificed by being buried alive. So, too, is he in parts of Scotland: but secretly, at dead of night, with much mystery; the object being to effect a cure in cases of epilepsy and insanity, by propitiating the demon that is supposed to dwell in those afflicted by these terrible maladies. Also, it is said, it is by no means unknown among the Highland crofters for one of a herd of cattle to be interred alive after a similar fashion, as an offering to the spirit of the murrain, when that disease, or anything resembling it, is more than usually prevalent.

Paganism is something which one does not usually associate with Catholic Ireland. It is a fact, however, that along parts of the wild Kerry coast, mystic rites, which savants have had no difficulty in identifying with those incidental to the worship of the Greek god Priapus, are performed to this day with more or less regularity.

IDEALISED HUMAN SACRIFICE.

The natives—wild, ignorant fisherfolk for the most part—are shy of letting strangers know anything about the rites in question, and inquirers are usually bluntly told to mind their own business, and not to pry into matters with which they have no concern. It is known, however, that the principal ceremony is emblematic of those human sacrifices that were undoubtedly exacted by the god of old.

A youth of fifteen or sixteen is the central figure. On the morning of the day appointed he is stripped naked and carried to the sea beach, accompanied by numbers of fishermen, their wives, and daughters. In front of him marches an aged man flourishing a hatchet. The rear of the procession is closed by another venerable man with a saw, which he also brandishes in the air at certain stated intervals.

As soon as the cortege arrives at the water's edge, the lad is dipped thrice into the sea, after which the whole following, both men and women, form a ring round him and shout joyfully. Certain emblematic passes are also made over his head and heart with the saw and the hatchet, after which he is carried, still nude, back to the village whence he came. This mummery is supposed to not only insure to fishermen taking part in it an abundant harvest of the sea, but to also secure to the community at large teeming flocks and fruitful fields.

A FLANNEL GOD.

This, of course, is paganism pure and simple; but it is a refined and idealised form of paganism. In some of the out-lying islands, however, and notably in Inniskea, off the coast of Mayo, actual idolatry was openly prevalent well within the memory of people now living; and, it is creditably averred, is still secretly practised.

The Inniskea idol is of stone, is called in the Irish language "Neovougi," and has been from time immemorial religiously preserved and worshipped. In appearance the god resembles a thick roll of homespun flannel, which arises from the custom of dedicating to it a dress of that material whenever its aid is sought. This is sewn on by an old woman, its priestess.

Of the early history of the image no authentic information can be procured, but its power is believed by its votaries, the islanders, to be immense. They have recourse to it in sickness, they invoke its aid alike in preserving from danger their friends, and in confounding their enemies; and especially is it solicited when it is desired to calm the waves, to admit of the fishermen pursuing their vocation or visiting the mainland for supplies.

"How old are you, sonny?"

"Twelve years old, sir."

"You are very small for your age. What is your name?"

"Johnny Smith. My father is a baker."

"I might have guessed it by your size. You remind me of one of his loaves."

PLAYING WITH DEATH FOR £1 A WEEK.

The Risks some Government Employees have to Run.

THE operation of withdrawing a "live" shell from a gun is a delicate one, necessarily fraught with considerable danger.

A "live" shell, by the way, is one which contains a bursting charge of powder, cordite, or other explosive. When required for use a fuse is screwed into the nose of the shell. Fuses are divided into time, percussion, or a combination of both.

The implement used for withdrawing shell from a muzzle-loading gun is called a projectile extractor. It consists of a composite metal cup, not unlike an ordinary saucer with the bottom cut out, placed, with the curves upward, upon a tea-cup.

A long incurved clip projects beyond the cup on either side, and works in a slit cut in the edge of the "saucer." Fixed to the base of the cup is a tube, shaped to receive the head of a long ash pole or stave, which varies in length and thickness, according to the calibre of the gun. The clips are hinged to the middle of the tube, which contains in its upper end a powerful spring to grip the clips and control their movements. Upon the inner side of the business end of each clip is a small stud.

The method of extraction is as follows:

After the friction-tube has been removed from the vent, the extractor is passed up the bore of the gun until it touches the nose of the shell.

It is then carefully revolved until the clip studs find and grip the depressions in the surface of the shell, which is slowly withdrawn.

Contact with the fuse—and a consequent explosion—is avoided by the depth of the cup.

The implement for use with a breech-loading weapon is known as a projectile ejector. It is similar in every respect to the extractor, save that it has no clips, and a very much longer stave. Some old pattern ejectors still in use have wooden heads like rammers, the "cup and saucer" arrangement being hollowed out instead of shaped.

The breech-block having been opened, and the cartridge removed, the ejector is inserted at the muzzle of the gun, the shell being pushed slowly into the chamber, and ejected at the breech. Great care is taken to prevent the shell from falling to the ground.

Every possible precaution is observed for the prevention of accidents in magazines. The windows are as small as possible, walls are thick, ventilation is perfect. Sheet-copper roofs and numerous conductors protect the buildings from lightning. All tools, chisels, hammerheads, knives, rods, funnels, and implements of every description for the filling and emptying of shell, are made either of copper or gunmetal. Even the needles used for sewing cartridge bags are bronze. Iron and steel are absolutely tabooed.

Special clothing is issued to the employees for wear in the magazine buildings. The men discard their own attire before entering in the morning, and change again before leaving at night. Magazine shoes, sewn with silk, and pegged with wooden nails, are also issued, a pair to each man.

Everyone, irrespective of rank or rating, entering the precincts of the magazine, is rigorously searched. Matches and pipes must be left at the gate.

Some time ago the men employed in a certain large magazine were suspected of a surreptitious indulgence in sly whiffs of tobacco. The practice was more than usually scolded and dangerous, because a single spark would have exploded several thousand tons of powder, which would have reduced the adjacent town to ruins. Traps were laid without result.

One day the officer in charge strolled into the shell-filling room with an unlit cigarette between his lips. He stood for a moment watching the progress of work, then casually asked for a match. The ruse worked. Several men unthinkingly produced boxes of matches. Those men were instantly "sacked," and smoking ceased from that day.

When one considers that these men were earning less than a pound a week by the momentary risk of their lives, it seems incredible they should have been so foolish as to smoke in the magazine.

No fires or lights are allowed upon magazine ships under any circumstances. The lot of those who live on board is consequently a hard one, especially in depth of winter.

Magazine ships are painted red and hidden away remote creeks, often in very bleak situations. The house is usually on shore, or situated on board a vessel moored a considerable distance away. In each case men's meals have to be brought to them by boat. Smoking is strictly prohibited in or near the ship.

War Department vessels carrying powder, cartridges, or live shell, invariably fly a large red flag at the mast-head.

No fires are permitted, not even in the coldest weather. Smoking is also forbidden.

In the case of steamships special precautions are taken in the stokehold to prevent the escape of sparks from the smoke-stack.

Every member of the crew wears a magazine outfit, consisting of a stout black coat and trousers made from an alpaca-like material, with horn buttons. The regulation shoes, previously described, are worn.

THE LADY'S MAGAZINE for May is full of new features. The principal ones are—

QUESTIONS.

WORTH ANSWERING

Half-a-crown is paid for every Question used, and two guineas a column for Replies.

REPLIES.

WHERE CLIMATE GUARDS.

Which Important Country in Europe has Proved most Deadly to Invaders by Reason of its Climate? (6635.)

That which is now comprised in the Kingdom of Holland. It has probably suffered more invasions than any other part of Europe, and none of the invaders, since Roman times, have entered it without immense loss of life from fevers, ague, and rheumatic troubles induced by its bad water and swampy soil. The Spanish armies who occupied the country during the reign of Philip II., and subsequently were constantly decimated by disease, and the Scots Brigade, which fought in the Dutch service from 1672 onwards, suffered similar losses. At Bergen-op-zoom, the latter lost 1,100 out of 1,400 from this cause, and from wounds. Marlborough's campaigns brought similar experiences, although, as it was considered then "effeminate for a soldier to be ill on service," there is little record of the actual mortality from disease. This, however, was not the case at the time of the Walcheren expedition, the returns for which show that the Dutch climate was responsible for the death of 4,000 men out of 89,000 in a few months, whilst 11,500 sick were invalided home.

THE PROTOTYPES OF CECIL RHODES.

Which Foreign Statesman most Resembled Cecil Rhodes in his Aim and Methods? (6632.)

The parallel which has often been drawn between Rhodes and Bismarck is far from correct save in a single sense—both were devoted to the extension of their country's dominion. Their methods were totally different. Two somewhat closer likenesses may be traced between the South African empire-maker and Cortez, the Spanish conqueror, and Dupleix, the founder of the French Indian empire.

All three men acted on the same principle that all methods were justifiable for extension of empire, and the development of civilisation, and that the best and quickest means to this end was the power of money. All three amassed wealth, not for themselves, but to use in empire-making, and none were very particular as to how they got it. All succeeded in adding vast territories to their sovereign's dominions, and all spent gold like water to do it. The Spaniard and the Frenchman were, of course, fighting men, but that was a necessity of their age. The Indian Empire, founded by Dupleix, soon melted away before the genius of Clive, but, if his sovereign had spent on empire-making what he wasted in vicious pleasures, the result might have been somewhat different.

"PROTECTIVE COLOURING."

Why, as a Rule, are the Lower Parts of Sea Birds White and the Upper Parts of Fishes Dark? (6646.)

This arrangement is one of the many devices of Nature for the preservation of species, and its main object is to make the bird or fish as difficult as possible for its enemies to see. Thus, the sea-bird, as a rule, is attacked by enemies of its own kind from above, and the dark colouring on its back is not nearly so conspicuous against the dark water as a lighter hue would be. Again, as birds are liable to attack from some fish, their white under-colouring makes them difficult to see against the light above the water.

So, too, fish are attacked by birds. If their upper colouring were white they would be conspicuous marks to their diving foes of the air, while to their enemies of the water, which attack them on a level plane, the half light and half dark colouring not only makes them apparently smaller than they are, but much more difficult to see. Lastly, in the case of ground fish, such as soles, their backs are not only, as a rule, the same colour as the bottom on which they feed, but are, in some cases, even marked to resemble it.

QUESTIONS.

6671. Have coloured troops ever been used in warfare between civilized nations?
6672. Which British colony has the best future prospects?
6673. What benefits would inter-communication with other planets probably bring us?
6674. Among which people is there the most striking uniformity in dress?
6675. Which was the most momentous event announced to the public through a newspaper?
6676. To what savage nation has the introduction of clothes been most harmful?
6677. Which periodic epidemic in this country seems to recur with the most consistent regularity?
6678. How is the present mispronunciation of such words as Delvoir (Bevor) and St. John (Binjun) to be accounted for?
6679. Which would probably be the best practical use to which a committee of my twelve millionaires could put their surplus wealth?
6680. Would human control of the weather be of general advantage to the race?

CONDITIONS.

We shall be glad to receive from our readers replies to any of the questions asked here. Each reply must bear the writer's name and address. We shall print a selection of replies to each question, and shall pay at the rate of £1 a column for all matter printed. The same reader may send replies to any number of questions, whether his own or not. Replies should be marked "Replies" in the top left-hand corner, and answers to the questions in any issue of the paper must reach us in first post on the Monday of the week following that for which the paper is dated. Payment will only be made for replies published. Authorities on which replies are based must be given where possible. Half-a-crown will be paid on publication for every question received which is considered worthy of insertion.

THE MOST ROYAL BLOOD.

What Strain of Blood is Prevalent in Common by all the Crowned Heads of Europe, the Sultan and the Present Dynasties of Serbia and Montenegro Excepted? (6636.)

All European monarchs have some trace of Stuart blood in their veins. The connections are, of course, too numerous to be given here, but the student of history can easily trace them as they do not begin farther back than Charles I., and all proceed through his daughters, with the exception of his sister Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, from whom the Emperor of Austria derives his share. The main channels are the Royal Houses of Britain, Orange, and Denmark. Another Royal strain which is widely spread is the Plantagenet, but its ramifications are far more intricate than those of the Stuart blood. It must, therefore, suffice here to say that out of nineteen living crowned heads, no fewer than sixteen can claim blood-kinship with the first Plantagenet King of England.

ANTI-ANTISEPTICS.

Which of the Greatest of Modern Surgical Discoveries was most Hostilely Received by the Medical Profession? (6637.)

Undoubtedly Lister's discovery of the antiseptic (contra-poison) treatment of wounds, and its use in surgical operations. Before his time far more men died of wounds in battle than were killed outright. Now it is the rule, and not the exception, for the wounded soldier to recover, if recovery be possible. This is due almost entirely to Lister's discovery of the means of preventing gangrene and inflammation. The treatment has also made possible surgical operations which could not have been attempted before his time. Nevertheless, even so late as the Franco-German War, his discovery was treated with almost universal ridicule and hostility by doctors and surgeons. Of course the opposition was short-lived, for Lister's enormous percentage of cures formed an argument to which there was no possible answer.

SEX-FLIGHTS OF BIRDS.

Which Birds Conduct their Flights by Order of Sex? (6641.)

Starlings, golden plovers, wheatears, and curlews are some of the birds in which the migration by sex is most marked. So early as June the first contingent starts, composed of those older birds, who from damaged eggs or lost broods, have no parental duties to detain them. So strong is the desire to leave their summer quarters, that, in many instances, they depart long before their moulting is complete. The second company to leave consists of the young birds, six to eight weeks old, which travel in tens of thousands daily till the end of July. A pause of a month or so occurs in which neither old nor young are seen. In September and October, the adult males, in the glory of their new plumage, start for the South.

Later still, sometimes even in December, the females, detained awhile by their maternal duties and later moulting, follow the rear being brought up by the weaklings and the crippled, an irregular army, whose condition is often pitiable, and in the case of hooded crows, extremely so.

Redstarts, swallows, chaffinches, willow-warblers, whinchats, blackbirds, pied flycatchers, and buntings migrate in nearly a similar manner. On the return journey in spring, the order is inverted. The most handsome adult males are the pioneers; then come the adult females, after them the younger birds, the migration closing with the weakly and wounded stragglers as before.

STEAM, THE MODERN MAGICIAN.

Which Invention Did most to Change the Distribution of Wealth among Modern Nations? (6642.)

The application of steam-power to manufactures and navigation revolutionised industrial history, though something must be conceded to the fortunate circumstances which gave to Great Britain the chief advantage of the invention. The two main sources of wealth to this country had formerly been agriculture and the carrying trade on the sea. The former could not have been developed much further, but the possession of the naval trade enabled Britain to take immediate and full advantage of her great resources of coal and iron both in regard to the importation of raw material and the distribution of

finished goods. There was ample wealth in the country to enable the new methods to start "full swing," and the result was an expansion of production and commerce such as the world has never seen. As wealth advanced, Britain became the great lending and investing country of the world, and has thus not only profited by her own industries directly, but has been enabled to draw tribute from the industries of other lands. The same factor has led to a great alteration of the distribution of wealth between class and class, and to the possession by the industrial classes collectively of a greater portion of the national wealth.

A PROTESTANT-CATHOLIC SAINT.

Which Distinguished Protestant was Venerated after Death as a Catholic Saint? (6643.)

The celebrated Admiral Gaspard de Coligny, killed in the Bartholomew Massacre, in 1572. In the course of repairs executed by order of Prince Louis Joseph de Bourbon in the chapel of the chateau at Chantilly, the Admiral's body was discovered. It had been secretly interred there, after the massacre, by the direction of his cousin, the Duc de Montmorency. Being asked what was to be done with the remains, when thus strangely found, the Bishop of Senlis replied that "what was discovered in holy ground should return to it." After this authorisation the body was placed in the parish church, beside the first pillar to the left on entering, and down, at least, to the time of Vayasse de Villers, who published an account of the singular circumstance, in 1813, mothers continued to make pilgrimages to "St. Gaspard de Coligny," and to present offerings at his tomb for the cure of children suffering from rickets. The respect paid by the good bishop to the remains, and the interest shown in the re-interment by the Montmorencys and other noble families, no doubt gave rise to the mistake under which the Catholic peasant women came to pay their veneration over the remains of a Huguenot leader, unknown, of course, to them as such.

THE MOST CONSERVATIVE ANIMAL.

What Animal has Changed Least since Prehistoric Times? (6644.)

The tapir, as is proved by the fact that fossil tapirs, belonging to a very remote period of the world's history, are practically indistinguishable from those now living. "The tapirs," Wallace says, "form a small group of mammals, whose discontinuous distribution plainly indicates their approaching extinction." It is a singular fact that so closely allied animals as the Malayan and the American tapirs are found in such distant regions and in no intervening places; but the tapirs must once have had a very wide distribution.

There is no proof of their having lived in the Eocene epoch; but by the Middle Miocene, tapirs unrecognisable generically from those now existing were already formed, so that they share the honours with *Ayomochus* or *dorcatherium* of being the oldest living mammalian form. This latter animal is a small Artiodactyle, somewhat intermediate in structure between a deer and a pig, found living in Western Africa, and fossil in deposits of Miocene age in Germany. They appear to have become extinct in Europe before the Pleistocene period; but in other regions their distribution at this age was wider than at present.

THE EARLIEST MENU.

Who Introduced the Menu Card? (6645.)

The earliest mention of such a document in its present form is in connection with a banquet given by the Brewers Company at Brewers' Hall, in the City of London, in the year 1419. In this, the items are set out in quite modern form, save for the fact that the dishes are described in English, not in French. On the Continent the invention is attributed to Henry, Duke of Brunswick, who began to reign in 1569. At all his banquets he was furnished with a list of dishes that were to appear on the table, in order that he might reserve his appetite for those which he liked best. In those days of long and heavy bills of fare the precaution recommended itself as a wise one and gradually came into general use. In modern times the use of the menu was revived by Napoleon the Great, and from the French capital it spread gradually over Europe and the civilized world.

SHE: "They held a mirror over her face to see if she was alive. I don't understand that."
HE: "Why, you see, if she was alive she'd open her eyes and look in it."

TOM: "I wish that I had Joe's good luck."
DICK: "So he's generally lucky?"
TOM: "Lucky! If he walked out of the window in his sleep at dead of night there would be another man going by below carrying a feather bed."

"It's funny our minister never gets married!" remarked the young husband, who had just refused his wife a bonnet in his endeavour to change the subject.
"I think he'd make a good husband!"
"Well," replied the wife warmly, "he didn't seem to make a very good one when he married us."

"WHAT was the matter with Mrs. Scadds?" inquired the doctor's wife.
"Oh, a cold," he replied.
"Very bad?"
"Yes; disgustingly so. Just one of those simple little things that you can't possibly get more than two visits out of."

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—"Health and Beauty," "Mothers and Children," "Behind the Scenes" (gossipy notes on stage favourites)—



According to law it would seem that proprietors of circulating libraries must be acquainted with the contents of every book in their possession. A great library, whose headquarters are in Oxford Street, was recently compelled to pay a sum of £100, because a book circulated by its proprietors contained a statement reflecting on the plaintiff.

Among the million and a quarter cases yearly tried in British law courts, the claims for damages are many and peculiar. An Isle of Wight farmer recently accumulated on his land 5,000 loads of refuse. This produced a plague of rats, which ate up two acres of oats and 4,000 cabbage plants, belonging to a neighbour, hencecombed a hundred yards of bank, and did other damage. Thereupon the owner of the damaged property sued. He was granted an injunction against the accumulation by the other of more refuse than was actually necessary for manurial purposes; but this decision was appealed against on the ground that as there was no ownership in rats there could be no liability for what they did.

The owner of a laundry at Kensal Rise with two friends took a four-wheeled cab from St. John's Wood to his home, and the three were peacefully bowling down the Harrow Road when the seat on which the laundry owner was sitting collapsed, and with it the floor of the cab. The unfortunate man fell with a crash into the road breaking his leg. For this he sued the owner of the cab. The latter put in a defence that the occupants of the vehicle were dancing in it. But the jury decided that it would be difficult for three middle-aged gentlemen to execute a dance in such narrow limits, and gave the injured party £200.

MAKING A RETRIEVER A BULLDOG—10s.

It would seem only fair that a passenger should be entitled to a seat in a train in return for his fare. A Basingstoke solicitor, travelling to Margate by the South Eastern, found sixteen people in his compartment, gave up his seat to a lady, and sued the company for the return of his fare. The judge ruled against him on the ground that the company gave no undertaking to provide a seat for every passenger.

A somewhat similar case comes from America. A Chicago man paid five cents (2½d.) for his ticket on the Elevated Railway, passed through the turnstile, and waited half an hour for a train which never came. He brought a suit for the return of the fare and won it. But the expenses of the case were sixteen shillings.

Claim and counter-claim are amusingly illustrated in a case which was heard recently in the Midlands. A retriever, hunting a cat, went full tilt into a closed door, smashed a panel and its nose as well. The owner of the door sued the owner of the dog "for damages to door, 10s." The latter promptly replied: "To damages for having converted a docile retriever into an evil-looking bull dog, 10s. Suppose we cry quits."

Another retriever was seen in Mr Justice Phillimore's Court a few months ago. He trotted round and wagged his tail so amiably that it was difficult to believe how serious had been his misdeeds. Rushing out of his master's gate with a loud bark he had frightened a neighbour's horse, and caused it to bolt and smash the carriage. The bill for that bark was £92 15s.

TO SHIFTING A HEART—£1,200.

Railway accidents have sometimes odd effects. Last May, a gentleman named Lowenstein claimed damages from a railway company on the ground that an accident on their line had shifted his heart. He brought medical testimony to prove this strange injury, and the jury, applying their hands to his side, could actually feel his heart beating in a position lower down than was natural. The doctors declared that the displacement of this important organ made its work harder, and the life of the injured man proportionately precarious. He was awarded £1,200.

A dancing master, who was cycling in the New Cross Road, was run down by a van, and one knee so injured as to render him incapable of dancing. He sued the firm who owned the van and recovered £770.

But this claim is not so strange as one made recently in a Vienna law court, where a lady sued her partner at a masked ball for letting her fall, and so causing her severe injury. The defendant ungallantly declared that she was so poor a dancer as to make it most difficult to steer her through a crowded room. She retorted that he tried fancy steps which had ended in disaster. But the jury decided that a man could not be held responsible for the safety of his partner, and the case was dismissed.

Slander by searchlight was the cause of an action brought by Professor Stoker, of the Dutch city of Haarlem. He and his fiancée, a young schoolmistress, named Dahmais, were sitting in the park together, when a practical joker turned a searchlight upon them at the very moment that the lover was snatching a kiss.

The consequence was a great deal of talk and the dismissal of them both from their employment. Damages were asked against the searchlight man to the tune of £2,000. But the action eventually failed.

Rather a novel claim was that made the other day by a firm of Holywell Street booksellers against the London County Council. Their shop was swept away in the new Strand improvement scheme, and they were, of course, obliged to move elsewhere their stock of over 400,000 volumes. All these books bore the Holywell Street imprint, and it was said that the alteration in the shape of new title pages would cost £2,861, which sum the Council were asked to pay.

For a lady to fall foul of a business firm because they openly acknowledged that hers was the prettiest face they had seen is something entirely novel. A Minneapolis flour mill recently patented an extra fine brand of wheat flour, and by way of proclaiming its excellence, named it after a certain beautiful young singer, whose lithographed portrait was placed on every sack. To their amazement they found an action entered against them by the lady in question with £3,000 set as damages. The suit, however, was dismissed, the lady failing to show actual damage done her in any way.

Nothing in the matter of damage suits is more remarkable than the way in which compensation varies in different cases. A Melbourne boy of eight had a finger crushed in a gate at a level crossing. His parents obtained £1,000 from the railway company. About the same date a man, named Trimmell, who lost an eye in the service of a British electrical company, received £150 only. A few months earlier, an old woman, named Catherine Tracy, was killed by the American Union Railway Company. The amount paid to the administrators of her estate above the costs of the suit was threepence!

"Severely Smitten."

Her voice had such a pleasing tone,
Combined with other charming wiles;
He seemed to live for her alone,
Content to bask in beauty's smiles.

He often sought her company,
And many a billet-doux was written;
Till all his friends agreed that he
Was certainly "severely smitten."

They've married since, and when he comes
Returning blithely home at morn,
Some men might dread a spouse's wrath,
And wish that they had ne'er been born.

She welcomes him at one a.m.
In manner playful as a kitten;
And shows such striking little ways,
That he is still severely smitten!

What His Mother Would Do.

A TEACHER in a board school the other day was "showing off" her pupils before a number of visitors.

During the spelling lesson one small red-haired boy was given the word "introduction." He paused, twisted his lips, stared, and then in a faltering way spelt it correctly, and was apparently very surprised when he discovered that he had done it.

"Do you know what that word means?" asked the teacher.

"No, miss."
"Well, now, I'll explain it to you. Does your mother ever have visitors?"

"Yes, miss."
"Well, now, suppose that two women came to call on your mother. Your mother knows one of the women, but doesn't know the other. She has never seen the woman, and doesn't even know her name. Now, how would she become acquainted with this woman and find out her name?"

"She'd send for a pot of beer!"
The visitors were convulsed with laughter, and, as that was probably the correct answer, the teacher had nothing further to say.

"MR. HIGHWATER, how is it I find no cream on your milk?"
Milkman: "Well, mum, I expect the cows are holding it back for strawberry time."

HE: "When we get better acquainted I shall call you by your first name."
She: "All right. And I hope our acquaintance will reach the point where my friends can call me by your last name."

Mrs. A.: "My husband and I agreed to meet at a certain milliner's shop at two o'clock yesterday afternoon, and he kept me waiting over an hour."
Mrs. B.: "I suppose you were quite angry."

Mrs. A.: "No; he was angry with me. You see I spent the time buying ever so many nice things I wanted."

OUR DEBT TO THE WORM.

FIELD LABOURERS WHO WORK FOR NOTHING.

WORMS will eat almost anything. They will feed on their own dead companions or raw meat if such comes in their way; but their chief diet is decaying leaves. These are pulled into their burrows, torn up small and swallowed. The experiment has been tried of keeping two worms in a pot of sand well moistened. A good supply of dead leaves was always on the top. Within a year the sand was covered with a layer, four inches deep, of rich vegetable mould.

Where worms are plentiful Mr. Darwin reckoned that these hard-working creatures bring to the surface every year from fourteen to eighteen tons of loam on every acre. If the farmer attempted to do this work himself it would cost him at least £5 an acre. Indeed, it could not be done so satisfactorily by human agency.

On average English soil worms raise ten tons of mould to the acre yearly, and this is by no means the only help they give to man. The little tunnels which worms make run down from three to six feet into the ground, and are of great use in draining the land.

The soil brought up from these tunnels is ground up fine and so is much more suitable for plant food than it would otherwise be, while the little channels left in the soil are greedily seized by the roots of corn and clover as a means of penetrating the ground in search of moisture. Farming may be in a bad way, but it would be infinitely worse were it not for the worm.

In various parts of this and other countries the soil is naturally dry, being sandy or peaty. In such localities the worm cannot work. But these lands are not without their free labourers. On the light mountain soils of Ireland the hill-building ants toil incessantly for five months in the year. These queer creatures always choose a hard or rocky foundation to make their nest on, and this they cover with a liberal coating of soil. Seeds settle on these ant hills, and soon a patch of green, two or three feet square, covers the once barren rock.

Next spring the ants move to a new site and commence operations afresh. They never keep to the same site for more than one year. Another kind of ant works on the peat bogs. These do not make an annual fitting, but build their castle higher and higher every year, and so gradually convert much of the useless peat into good soil.

Were it not for the termite (generally, but incorrectly known as the white ant), the desert of Sahara would probably be at least twice as big as it is. The termite lives on dead wood, and every branch that falls in the forests of the tropics of Africa, India, and Australia is first plastered with soil and then devoured. The insect also climbs standing trees, making earth tunnels up their trunks in search of dead branches.

Besides all this it builds huge mounds, sometimes twenty feet high, and burrows fifteen feet into the ground below. It keeps the whole soil in constant motion, and fertilises it by the constant burying of organic matter. Consequently plant growth flourishes enormously, and attracts more and more rain. It is a fact attested by recent explorers that year by year the forests are advancing upon the desert in the southern part of the French Soudan, and for this great work so important to future generations the termite is mainly responsible.

If you throw down a dead bird or mouse on a grass field in summer, and return to the spot a day or two later, the chances are that the creature has disappeared. Dig beneath the spot where it lay, and you will find it neatly interred and covered up with soil which it fertilises.

This is the work of the burying-beetle. No human sexton could do proportionate work. One of these beetles has been known to bury a mole forty times its own weight; this is equal to one man with a spade burying two elephants unaided.

Four beetles which were caught for the purpose of seeing how much work they could do, interred, within seven weeks, four frogs, three birds, two small fish, one mole, two grasshoppers, the entrails of a large fish, and about half a pound of liver. Millions of such beetles are at work all the world over, especially in the tropics, and the aggregate amount of good they do to the soil is of immense value.

A Herefordshire mole catcher recently boasted having destroyed a thousand moles within a year. He should have been ashamed of his exploit. True, the mole does damage. Where moles are plentiful sometimes drier the soil too thoroughly by their subterranean galleries, they damage crops by uprooting them, and they certainly do not improve a tennis lawn.

Yet the good the mole does outweighs the evil. No other animal in the world has such an appetite in proportion to its size. A man who ate as much in comparison would need two sheep and a dozen chickens a day.

A large amount of the mole's food consists of injurious insects and grubs. It eats only animal food. In stiff clay land its tunnels do much good in drawing off the surface water and conducting it to the rock below, which it disintegrates and turns into useful soil, while the amount of organic matter it adds to the soil is very considerable.



To Distinguish Irregulars.

The members of the various Irregular corps from South Africa may be identified, so military authorities say, by observing the adornment of their hats. Thus, "Roberts' Horse" wear a black ostrich feather; the South African Light Horse a black feather from the tail of the Sakabula bird of Natal; the Australian contingent, emu's feathers; Lord Kitchener's Bodyguard, a red ostrich feather; Driscoll's Scouts, a green puggaree; and Brabant's Horse, a blue and white puggaree.

How Manx Roads are Kept Up.

Roads in the Isle of Man are maintained in a curious way. The revenue is derived from two sources—a small tax upon every wheel and shod hoof and a levy upon every male inhabitant, who must give a day's work on the road or its equivalent in cash.

Bear in a Motor-Car.

Prince Stourdas made a sensational entry the other day into Pau on his motor-car. Mounted on the seat behind him was a five-year-old bear wearing a chauffeur's cap, and holding a huge pipe in its mouth. This animal had been shot by the Prince near Gubus, twenty miles distant from Pau, early in the morning.

Aged "Invalid."

Some list ought really to be kept of "distinguished invalids" suffering from the prevailing mania. The last sad case to be recorded is that of an old maiden lady, who had always appeared sane and well in spite of her eighty-one years. Only the other day, unhappily, she, too, was a competitor in a ping-pong tournament held in Yorkshire. Otherwise she remains well.

Prayers for Husbands.

Hundreds of women were praying daily before Easter for husbands in St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Hoboken, U.S.A., during the Novena, or nine days, season of prayer. There have been very few marriages in the parish of recent years, and mothers began praying for husbands for their marriageable daughters. The young women were delighted with the proposal of the devotions, and flocked to church, causing a phenomenal attendance. They also started an endless chain of prayer for husbands as the subject of their supplications.

An Unexpected Answer.

One of his Majesty's inspectors of schools visited a Welsh school recently, and, among other things, gave an address to the scholars, in which he endeavored to impress upon their minds the importance of a man possessing good virtues. As an illustration, he described his own household, how the family depended upon him and loved him, ending his discourse with, "And now, my children, if I died, where would my loss be felt most keenly?" One little boy raised his hand, and, in a sweet treble voice, said, "Please, sir, in heaven." The inspector asked no more questions.

£6,360 Duty on Dresses.

The latest record to be broken in America is that for the highest duty on foreign-made dresses. This achievement is to be put to the credit of Mrs. Collis P. Huntington, who recently arrived in New York with gowns which were appraised at 75,000 dollars (£15,000), and on which a duty of 31,800 dollars (£6,360) was imposed. The gowns were packed in twenty trunks, which, presumably, were not marked "Wanted on the voyage." Mrs. Huntington paid the import promptly, without protest, having made what the officials report as "the largest declaration ever known for one woman."

Historical Elm Trunk.

Among the curios of Windsor Castle is a chair made entirely out of the trunk of the famous elm by which the Duke of Wellington stood at the Battle of Waterloo. The history of the tree is curious. When Mr. Children, one of the curators of the British Museum, visited the plain of Waterloo not many years after the battle, he found the tree in question marked for destruction by the proprietor of the soil, who told him that so many people came to visit it that the produce of half an acre of land was annually lost in consequence. A bargain was soon struck, and Mr. Children became the owner of this precious piece of timber.

"Nursery" for Cycling Champions.

Like the heathen Chinese, the ways of some people are extensive and peculiar. We are told that the famous French cycling champion, Jacquelin, has started a "nursery" for embryo cycling champions, and is meeting with a full measure of success. The celebrated racing cyclist has received a vast number of communications from youngsters, who have expressed a wish to become under his tuition the racing cracks and champions of the future. Acting like an army doctor, Jacquelin put the candidates through a rigid examination, but was compelled to reject many youths as not being constitutionally strong enough to undergo the strain of cycle racing. There is no doubt a great deal to be said in the idea of careful training from an early age, with the special object in view of cycle racing. In England at the present time, however, one would think twice before giving much time and attention to racing, at all events for the express purpose of making a living out of it. Without the attendance of the public at race meetings the sports promoters generally find themselves crippled, and the secret of the decline of cycle racing in England, and more particularly in London, is no doubt to be found in the fact that cyclists as a class prefer spending their afternoons in riding through the country in preference to watching other cyclists race.

The Sorrow of China.

The Yellow River is styled the "Sorrow of China." During the last century it has changed its course twenty-two times and now flows into the sea through a mouth 600 miles distant from that of 100 years ago. It is estimated that its floods in the past century have cost China 11,000,000 lives.

A Novel Dining-room.

Preparations for the voyage of the President of the French Republic to Russia are actively proceeding at Brest. An immense dining-room, which can be taken to pieces, is being constructed on the *Montcalm*, and will be put together before Kronstadt is reached, in which port the President will offer a grand luncheon to the Russian sovereigns.

Voting by Electricity.

One of the latest things is to be put up in the House of Representatives in Washington, U.S.A. It provides that there be erected in rear of the Speaker's desk, and directly in front of the main entrance, such electrical devices and appliances, which, being connected with the desk of each member by wire, will enable him to touch a button and display his vote "aye" or "no" by small incandescent lights.

The Bridal Wreath.

The bridal wreath is usually formed of myrtle branches in Germany; it is made of orange blossoms in France, as well as in our own country; in Italy and the French Cantons of Switzerland it is of white roses; in Spain, the flowers of which it is composed are red roses and pinks; in the islands of Greece, vine leaves serve the purpose, and in Bohemia rosemary is employed; in German Switzerland, a crown of artificial flowers takes the place of the wreath.

Delicate Athletes.

A few weeks ago a football team travelled from the North to play a match on the Southern seaboard. They were provided with a special saloon carriage for the greater part of the way; but towards their journey's end, there being a short distance to travel on a branch line, the company's officials requested them to change into some ordinary first-class carriages reserved for them. The manager of the team refused to do so, for fear, as he said, that the fresh carriages might be damp! Does a bridegroom on his honeymoon ever have such tender solicitude for his bride?

Bread-making by a Steam Roller.

At various times the steam roller owned by the Rugby Urban District Council has served useful purposes in the town other than that of street making. Some time ago the engine at one of the newspaper offices broke down, and the steam roller was utilised to supply the power to drive the machinery. One evening a few weeks back the gas engine at the co-operative bakery failed, and the whole of the extensive baking plant being thrown idle, a bread famine was threatened for the following day. The difficulty, however, was got over by the aid of the steam roller, which was connected with the machinery, and all through the night bread was being made as though nothing unusual had happened.

Girls who Barter their Tresses.

The hair fairs (says a Paris correspondent) are among the most singular of provincial institutions; they commence in a few days in the villages of the old province of Limousin. The hair buyers shout out, in the curious *patois* of the district, invitations to the women to sell their tresses. The girls approach the stalls of these men, who have various articles, tempting to feminine eyes, exposed; make their choice, and then, taking their hats off and kneeling down they submit to have their beautiful locks shorn off. London is the chief market for the hair, and the annual sale from these Limousin villages represents £8,000—not to the poor girls who submit to the indignity, but to the merchants.

Coaling at Nagasaki.

The coaling of Army transports at Nagasaki, Japan, is one of the most interesting sights of a voyage, the work being done by about 400 Japanese men and women very quickly and by manual labour alone, no mechanical device of any kind being used. Coal-barges are run up along each side of the transport. Every opening is used to receive coal, while lines of women are formed on ladders and along the decks to pass coal in baskets from one to another. These red-cheeked, little, bright-eyed women work with great speed. A Japanese contractor, as soon as a transport or steamer arrives, quickly measures the bunker space to fill. He then contracts for the coal, and in less than three hours has about four hundred Japanese men and women loading coal from a dozen boats into the vessel.

Revenue Odds and Ends.

The revenue of England comes through many curious channels. The national accounts for a recent year mention the receipt of half-a-crown as "fees" by the Consul in Swaziland, and almost immediately following comes the item: "Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum. Sale of old rags, £14 12s. 4d." Fourpence a barrel on herrings enabled the Fishery Board of Scotland to swell the Exchequer by £4,830 in one year recently, and troubled consciences accounted for £456 0s. 9d. Unclaimed wrecks help the revenue to the extent of £20 odd, and a rent-charge of £2 16s. appears in the accounts between the State and a navigation company in Belfast. The rent-roll of the Guano Islands is another little extra for the Treasury, which saves the taxes £50 a year.

Magnet Drew a Steel Sliver from the Eye.

A few weeks since a foreman ganger on an American railway stood watching a gang of his men who were cutting steel rails. As he bent over close to one of the rails on which the sledge was descending a piece of steel flew upwards. Though he was wearing glasses, such was the velocity of the sliver that it cut through the glass, splintering it and entering the right eye. An oculist at once made an examination of the injured member, from which he found that the piece of metal had penetrated all the coats of the eye and was lodged in the vitreous humour. In this emergency the electro-magnet again proved its usefulness. The needle was applied twice, and the last time the steel obeyed the law of attraction and was drawn to the surface. When examined the sliver was found to be over a half inch in length and about as thick as an ordinary hat pin. Fortunately the wounded eye healed rapidly, and the injured man will suffer no further inconvenience.

Their Honesty.

A gentleman who had been allured by the announcement of a quiet country hotel in the North, came down the morning after his arrival complaining that his boots had been outside his door all night and until eight o'clock that morning, and nobody had touched them. The landlord, who, in his shirt sleeves, was tipped back in a chair, beamingly remarked: "Law bless ye, sir, ye might have left yer purse out there all night, nobody would have touched it. Honest folk down here, I tell ye."

Wrists and Temperature.

Actors and actresses say that if one of their number taints, cold water is poured on the wrists; the result is always immediate recovery. Athletes engaged in feats of endurance understand the importance of keeping the wrists cool in summer and warm in winter, but the general public goes on wearing tight gloves and heavy cuffs during the dog days and then wonders why it is hot. Taking off one's gloves, especially in church, often makes quite a surprising difference in one's temperature. Tight sleeves, above all things, make the wearer hot in oppressive weather.

Making a Bonfire of a Hospital.

In a hospital one would expect to find everything as up-to-date for the cure of disease as modern science can make it, but the case of a hospital in Jersey City seems to show that even such institutions may not be perfect. The medical officer has been inquiring into the condition of the hospital, and he declares it to be full of infectious germs. The sanitary conditions of the place are so bad that it is quite impossible to remedy them, and he recommends that the hospital be burnt. The germs will thus be destroyed, which will not be the case if the hospital is merely pulled down.

How Long is a Bicycle?

If you wish to have a little fun at the expense of a cycling friend, wait till he is out of sight of his machine and then ask him how long a bicycle is. The result is amusing; he will first look puzzled, and then make the wildest guesses. It has never occurred to him to ascertain that simple fact, and he will try to guess by making all kinds of mental calculations. Then he will probably become facetious, and essay a joke in the belief that there is some "catch" in the question, and that you will finally reply that it is as long as you can keep it, or something equally intelligent. This is a simple question, but it is one which but few cyclists have ever thought of answering.

A Snowstorm in Your Own Room.

There is an old joke concerning the severity of the winter in some distant portion of the earth—presumably in some part of the United States—to the effect that a man stood waist-deep in his own eloquence, the solution of this apparently enigmatical assertion being that his breath froze as he spoke and fell about him in the form of snowflakes. In Lapland, however, it is quite possible to have a miniature snowstorm in your own apartment. The opening of the door of a lapp dwelling in winter and the admission of the cold air causes condensation of the moisture in the room, and it immediately begins to fall to the floor in small snowflakes.

Fly-papers at the Front.

Sticky fly-papers are not exactly what one would suppose to be of use to our soldiers in South Africa, but a Tommy at the front asserts that he and some of his comrades have benefited greatly by the fly-papers sent out, at his request, by his brother. Through the help of this sticky paper he has secured many a good night's rest that would have been interrupted by noxious and annoying flies and other insects. The spread of disease is also checked by catching the tormentors. The hot weather is passing away now, but should the war be prolonged for another six months or so, benevolent relatives and friends, in search of a welcome present for Tommy, might do worse than send a fly-paper occasionally in a tin of grease-proof paper.

A Rat that Tries to Swim the Atlantic.

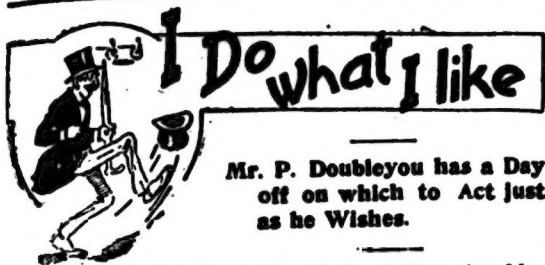
The strange characteristic of the lemming, a kind of rat which infests the east coast of Norway, is that it periodically migrates westward. Every few years large colonies of these rats turn their noses westward, and start on a journey that ends in death. They go over rivers and mountains, steadily crossing the country and rearing families on the way, till they reach the broad Atlantic. Here, one would imagine, they would stop, or turn in some other direction, in the hope of being able to continue their journey to the west by an over-land route; but they boldly plunge into the ocean, and swim, ever westward, till they are drowned. This is a fortunate characteristic for the Norwegians, for if the rats did not kill themselves the people would have a hard task to keep them under.

Changing a Coastline.

The Corporation of South Shields is effecting a striking change in the coastline stretching to the southward from the Tyne. For many years the view of the sea from South Shields has been obstructed by a huge embankment known as Bent's Hill. The latter has a curious history. In the days of the old sailing colliers the majority of vessels bound to the Tyne to load coal arrived with a stiffening of shingle as ballast. This, when discharged, was deposited to the east of the town, and the accumulations of many years raised a hill visible many miles out at sea. At a cost of £20,000 the local authorities some months ago undertook the removal of the embankment. The work will shortly be completed, and the site, several acres in extent, is to be laid out in parks, recreation grounds, and a marine parade.

Electric Beef.

The galvanic current increases the growth of tissue, not in other words, increases the amount of flesh. It was tried with two sets of guinea pigs, of the same age and fed in exactly the same manner for a given period, one cageful being subjected to the electric current day and night, whereas the animals in the other cage were kept clear of electricity. There was a gain of ten per cent. in the electrified guinea pigs. It has been known for some time that electricity promotes the growth of vegetables, and now that the principle is to be applied to animals, we shall soon hear of electrically-fattened cows, sheep, and pigs being on view at cattle shows, and butchers will mark their wares as "electric beef" and "galvanised mutton." The last term, by the way, would be admirably adapted for some steaks that are to be had at cheap restaurants.



Mr. P. Doubleyou has a Day off on which to Act just as he Wishes.

"Look here, Doubleyou," said the Editor, frankly, "those readers of yours keep on clamouring about my tyranny and so forth, and it's more trouble now to run you than run the paper. I'm going to make an experiment, and, therefore, for the next four-and-twenty hours, you will do what you like. You have now got no one to please but yourself till to-morrow."

"The Spaniards say, 'To-morrow never comes,'" I commented learnedly.

"In your case the Spaniards are mistaken," he replied, unappreciatively, "your to-morrow will come round all right, remember that."

Divested of my customary humility, I presented myself before the cashier.

"Well, what do you want?" he growled, offensively.

"Fifty pounds," I replied, placidly.

"What are you going to do with it?" he next asked inquisitively.

"What I like," I said, simply.

"I'll soon see about that," he snarled, as he bounced off to interview the Editor.

He soon saw about it. The result tickled my fancy pleasantly with a sense of unwonted power. He went out like a lion and came in like a lamb. As he paid over the fifty pounds with a dazed kind of look he muttered that the Editor's intellect seemed to be giving way.

As I was going out I saw the Fighting Editor's silk hat hanging up within the easy reach of all. It had just been nicely ironed.

I JUMP ON A HAT.

No one was in sight, so I took the hat down and stroked it lovingly with my sleeve, the wrong way. The idea grew upon me, and, by accident, so to speak, I let it drop on the floor. When I happened to kick it, it rolled about, as toppers will, and accumulated a surprising quantity of dust. I then felt that I should like to stand on that hat, and, seeing I was entitled to do what I liked, I did. When I had finished with the hat, its shape was that of a pair of bellows in repose, and I laughed aloud as I pictured the Fighting Editor trying to wear his crushed hat out to lunch.

I happened to glance round at this stage, and was horror-struck to observe him looking on, with a malignant smile.

"Spare me!" I cried. "And I will reveal all."

"Oh, I don't mind," he said, good-humouredly, "I rather enjoyed it."

"What?" I yelled, "you enjoyed seeing your good hat destroyed?"

"It isn't mine," he explained, airily, "it's the Editor's. Won't he be pleased! You'd better clear out before he holds a post-mortem on it."

Once outside, I prepared to celebrate the abolition of my slavery by doing something weird.

Now, though I had often interviewed celebrities for P.W., I had never been interviewed myself, and I didn't see any reason why I shouldn't be. I wanted to feel what it was like and write it up. I, therefore, determined that I would be interviewed, and in proper style too, by all the leading newspapers.

Proceeding to the Hotel Cecpole, I engaged a room in the name of Retsim P. Uoyelbuod—which, of course, is only Mister P. Doubleyou spelt backwards. The clerk misspelt it fearfully, and I signed the register in thoroughly distinguished fashion like this:

Retsim P. Uoyelbuod

Room No. 77 was allotted to me, and I paid for it in advance and came out again.

From the nearest telegraph office I wired as follows: "Editor, CHIMES, London. Your reporter may interview me in Room 77, Hotel Cecpole, at 11.30 precisely." I wired no name. That was carefully left to the imagination, and the time appointed gave just margin enough for the telegram to be delivered, and the interviewer to dash off in a hansom, without worrying about inquiries. I sent off similar telegrams all round with the times set five minutes apart right round the clock.

I then hurried off to another telegraph office not far away, and, as I neared it, I accosted a respectable-looking lad, who was gazing in at a shop-window.

"I say, my man, will you send off some telegrams for me?"

"Yes, sir," he replied, with alacrity.

"All right, then, here's thirty-five shillings, five for yourself, and thirty for the telegrams. Go right in to that post-office there, and start sending sixpenny telegrams to this address—'Uoyelbuod, Room 77, Hotel Cecpole, London'—as fast as ever you can. Wire anything you like. The great thing is speed. I shall expect about one telegram per minute from you till the thirty bob is done."

I saw him fairly started on the job, and then, obtaining a quantity of blank telegraph forms myself, I hurried back to the hotel, which I reached at 11.10. I ordered up boxes of cigars, cigarettes, and all accessories, also ink, pens, and stationery. I gave instructions that all visitors were to be shown into my room instantly, and without the formality of knocking.

All telegrams, too, were to be rushed into my hands without ceremony. I tipped every waiter, boots, buttons, and lift attendant I spoke to, indiscriminately, and in a quarter of an hour I was the most popular man in the hotel—with the attendants.

At two minutes to the half hour the first telegram came to hand, then another one, and then two at once. I laid my watch on the table before me, along with several handfuls of loose silver intermixed with sovereigns, and then started in to play my great game of bluff.

I RECEIVE INTERVIEWERS.

Seizing my blank telegram forms, I began scribbling out telegrams with delirious haste, and bustling them off as fast as I wrote them by the delighted Buttonesses. With each telegram I handed over a shilling snatched from the pile in front of me with a monotonous reminder to "Keep the change."

This exciting traffic was in full blast when, at 11.32, THE CHIMES reporter was hurried in by a zealous attendant, accompanied by two more Buttonesses with telegrams. I got a glimpse of him without looking up, and saw he was mystified and impressed, but rather pompous for my taste. I soon took the latter quality away from the interview.

Surrounded by an atmosphere of feverish haste, I kept on alternately tearing open telegrams, and scribbling and dispatching replies, but simultaneously with his arrival I opened a withering fire of chatter which staggered him more than anything else.

With a minimum of punctuation, few pauses, and no stops, the drift of my remarks, like those of other celebrities, ran thus:

"Ah! two minutes eleven seconds late I see. Bad habit, want of punctuality. My time is worth ten pounds per minute, so I can only give you two minutes more. Fire away with your leading questions—while I work—I'm used to it. Have a cigar. Waiter, pass the gentleman those cigars."

WHO AM I?

"Excuse me while I glance at these telegrams. Here, boy, open those other three. Oh, bother the War Office. 'Must see you to-day'—they just won't, that's all. Hullo, there, get this reply off instantly, 'War Office, Pall Mall. Cannot possibly come to-day, will to-morrow week do?' Have another cigar, sir. No; never smoke myself; don't have time. Ah! excuse me, here are some more telegrams. I'm kept at it twenty-three hours out of the twenty-four, nowadays. Only slept six hours during past week. Sleep too expensive. Have another cigar. Waiter, some more cigars for the gentleman. And now, good-bye. Sorry time's up, you know. Give my respects to the old man."

What a glorious time I had while it lasted. The telegrams came surging in, and I sent replies pouring out. It spread about in the hotel that I was respectively an American millionaire, Dr. Leyds, the German Emperor, the latest Man that Broke the Bank, Santos Dumont, the World's Ping-Pong Champion, and the inventor of a bullet-proof pair of bathing-pants.

Each reporter came in determined to extract information of some kind. None of them extracted anything but cigars, which were *ad lib*. Stay, one man, for a pictorial, succeeded in photographing me, with a platoon of attendants round me, reading four telegrams at once, and writing with both hands, while I pushed the box of cigars over to him with my foot.

I REPLACE THE SPOILT HAT.

Just before the bubble burst I paid my bill at the Hotel Cecpole, and left—it may be for years. You see, there was always a chance of some of the gentle strangers I was wiring to from the hotel tracking me down by means of the hotel stamp.

Did I get into the papers? Well, there's a question. Did you not see my photograph everywhere? Did not the EVENING NIGHT-LIGHT allude to the capabilities of the wealthy young Uoyelbuod, who could do eleven things at once, twice as many people, and work twenty-three hours per day without turning his hair?

Did not THE CHIMES announce, on high authority (mine), that an entirely new series of rumours were being carefully thought out regarding Russo-Japanese relations, and might be expected any moment?

I should smile. As a matter of fact, I do.

But gloom settled down on me once more as I thought of the Editor's hat. To ease my tortured mind about the morrow, I returned to the office, sought for the hat, and obtained therefrom data regarding size and maker that enabled me to replace it with a split-new guinea tile.

Only then did I discover that it was the Fighting Editor's hat, after all!

A WOMAN, in sending an order to a florist's for some seed, included in the list the "pink of politeness" and the "flower of chivalry." She said she had frequently read about these flowers in the newspapers, but had never seen them growing. The florist had none in stock, and informed his customer that they were becoming rarer every year.

A CASTLE IN THE AIR.

By F. Frankfort Moore.

THE engine driver on the Metropolitan Railway who, on getting a "day-off," spent it travelling on the District line, to and from Charing Cross and the Mansion House—that being, as he had always understood, the most characteristic section of the system—was heard to declare the next day that it was his impression that the advantages accruing from a change of air and scene were greatly overrated, and that for his part he did not feel to any appreciable extent recuperated by his holiday.

It was his firm belief, he said, after a calm and wholly dispassionate consideration of the matter, that the scenery and the atmosphere at some portions of the Metropolitan system—say, between Baker Street and King's Cross—surpassed anything to be found in the tunnels where he had spent his day. He was probably justified in his conclusions.

Without venturing to decide off-hand the delicate question of the comparative recuperative properties of the underground sections of the two highly convenient railway systems referred to, I think I may safely say that that engine driver's evidence was quite trustworthy, and I hope I may add, without giving offence to anyone, that he was a singularly unimaginative man.

The moral to be derived from his experience is that a change of air is not of itself beneficial unless it be a change from foul air to fresh air.

If you would like to know what such a change means, go to any seaside resort in the neighbourhood of a manufacturing centre and look at the faces of the boys and girls as the sea breeze comes upon them. I have done so many a time. The wan, pinched features become absolutely transformed. The dull, heavy eyes sparkle, and the shouts of delight that follow are but the natural attempts of overflowing hearts and lungs to get rid of their superfluity.

The founder of the FRESH AIR FUND must have had a similar experience to that which I have just recorded, or he would not have thrown himself so heartily into the scheme for establishing that FRESH AIR FUND which has already been the means of carrying sunshine into hundreds of thousands of homes.

For the sum of ninepence, so excellent and so economical is the management of this FRESH AIR FUND, an able-bodied boy—of the average appetite of a boy who is more accustomed to short commons than to long meadows—can be given a day in the country in peace and plenty. So that everyone who sends nine penny stamps to the office of this paper may feel certain that, in the course of a day or two, at least one face will be wreathed in such smiles as the lively imagination of Mr. Phil May could alone reproduce through the medium of black and white.

Some years ago I had a friend who had devoted his life to inventing things. He had contrived a machine for the manufacture of apple jelly out of seaweed, another for turning wood shavings into food for cattle. He had almost perfected a cast-iron policeman when he turned his attention to a scheme for conveying fresh air from mountain tops right to the centre of large towns.

His idea was, I recollect, to have it "laid on" like gas in pipes from house to house; so that should any family desire a whiff of Ben Nevis, all they had to do was to turn on a certain tap, and the room would quickly be filled with the freshest mountain air. He meant to have another tap, of course, for sea breezes, and another which would admit the scent of a hayfield into a house, in, say, the Borough Road.

Well, that was some years ago, and although I have watched the lists of patents granted in the meantime to the inventors of all sorts and conditions of machines, I have not been able to find any mention of the apparatus for bringing fresh air to the thousands of toilers in this human hive.

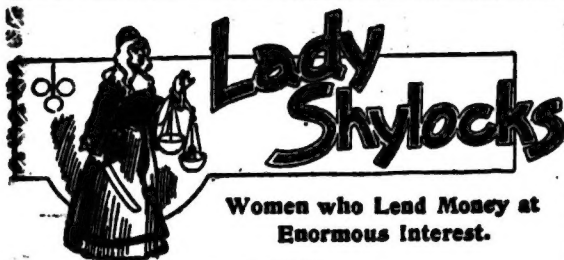
The nearest approach made to such an apparatus is the FRESH AIR FUND. To be sure, it does not bring the fresh air to the toilers, but it certainly does bring the toilers to the fresh air—yes, and it can do this at the rate of ninepence a head—no extra charge for arms and legs!

What more do you want for the present? What better way do you know of spending ninepence?

We have heard of persons who were fond of building "castles in the air." Now, this is precisely the style of architecture which the FRESH AIR FUND founder knows to be most relished by the people for whom he is catering. They live for a day in their airy castle, and the memory of its charm remains with them to the year's end.

The structure is rising daily by the help of the ninepences that thousands of kind contributors send in; but it is still far from completion. All the ninepences melt into air, it is true, but it is fresh air, and that goes to nourish the hearts of those whose lives know but little of what is fresh, what is sweet, and what is beautiful. Please send in your ninepence, or your fraction of ninepence.

[Collecting forms will be sent, post free, on application to the Hon. Sec., FRESH AIR FUND, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.]



THE Money Lending Act, which came into force twelvemonths ago last November, effected very little alteration in the ways of the modern Shylock. Means have been found to evade almost every provision of the Act, and particularly those enactments having reference to registration of money-lenders, and the prohibition of the use of more than one trade name.

Money-lenders, who formerly spread their nets by means of advertisements and branch offices carried on under various aliases, now simply register their duplicate businesses under the names of their clerks, and go on merrily as ever. Many have turned the necessity for registration to good account by artful announcements conveying the startling information that they are "Government Money-lenders," or that they are "now under Government control, and especially licensed for the granting of loans."

A good few, who all unsuspectingly do good business in small loans in poor neighbourhoods, have never troubled themselves at all about the Act. Of this number the majority are women, the wives of careful artisans, or small shopkeepers, who, beginning in a small way, have gradually extended their connection to a size which would be the envy of many a "licensed" money-lender.

These female Shylocks are little heard of by the general public, but scores of them are to be found in the poorer parts of every large town, and the extent to which poor housewives are dependent upon her for money "during the week" makes "mother" a veritable queen of the quarter.

"MOTHER" MAKES MONEY—

The power possessed by "mother" is really tremendous, and what she does not carry by moral weight, she is often able to exercise by the help of the "boys," whom she enlists in her service, and who help her to keep up the terrorism which she holds over her clients.

The wife of the lower-class artisan, although her "man" earns more than many a poor clerk, is generally quite unable to hold over any of her money until Monday, much less later in the week, and so she has early to resort to "mother." For small Monday to Saturday loans no better customer could be found, for "when she has it," the working-man's wife will make the money fly the while she pays her debts.

Several shillings will be borrowed on Monday for rent, club, and living. On Tuesday, and every other day of the week, a couple of shillings or so for food and coal will be required, and so on right up till Saturday, when, although it will only be a matter of an hour or so, a couple of shillings will be borrowed in order to have in readiness, against the good man's arrival home, a savoury dinner of those cook-shop delicacies which so tempt the appetite and tickle the palate of the poor.

—AND SMASHES WINDOWS.

Then comes the reckoning, and it is very rarely that there is much left of the week's wages when the principal and interest have been paid. The interest charged is at the rate of twopence in the shilling, and this works out at somewhere near 900 per cent. per annum. The whole must be paid in full early on Saturday evening, and "mother" strongly objects to lending again till Monday. If borrowed on Sunday the interest is increased to threepence.

Should any sudden misfortune which can be proved to her ladyship's satisfaction have prevented the customer from paying the full due, an extra week or two's credit may be allowed, but the full weekly interest must be paid each Saturday. A good deal of cringing and scraping has to be gone through for upon "mother" depends the bread and butter for the next week.

Woe betide the borrower who does not pay up. One premonitory message is sent out and no more. Failing that, the neighbourhood will be awakened that night by the sound of smashing glass. The "boys" are at work. In the dead of night, in almost less time than it takes to tell, two "boys" will smash practically every pane of glass in the house, and there is no redress, for, although the cause of the trouble will be well-known, none, even if they dared, could identify the miscreants.

Most of the breakages to be seen on Sunday morning in poor quarters have been instigated by indignant female Shylocks, and few are actually to be put down to the drunken orgies to which they are generally ascribed by passers-by.

On Monday morning the landlord calls for his rent. He sees the windows, and divines at once that his pocket will be saved by giving his tenant notice. That is generally what happens, but no removal, however surreptitiously undertaken, will escape "mother," and no peace will be obtained by the defaulter in that town until every penny of principal and accrued interest has been paid.

"Mother" often obtains the letting of the houses in her neighbourhood. Landlords are glad of someone on the spot who can be trusted, and especially one with as keen an eye and as sound business instincts as the money-lender possesses. Although he knows that the window-smashing may be traced to her, he also knows that probably half the rent he collects has first passed through her hands, and that while she takes care to fill his houses with her own clients, his Monday morning rent will be far more certain than if no convenience for borrowing existed. It is "mother's" influence with the landlord which also helps to make her so terrible.

The lady Shylock will sometimes essay to play the Lady Bountiful to a good customer whose husband is temporarily out-of-work—not, however, without pretty solid ultimate gain to herself. There will be no want for Sunday's dinner, but "mother" takes good care to buy the repeat herself and charge her own prices. She mustn't break her rule of not lending money to "out-of-workers," she says.

For a foreign leg or shoulder of mutton, costing, in the slums, 3d. or 3½d. a lb., she wants the price of best English at 7d. or 7½d., and for potatoes costing 6d. per peck (20 lbs.), she will charge 1s. or 1s. 2d., and this in addition to interest. Her bill will be something like this: To half leg of best English mutton, 2s. 5d.; to 10 lbs. best potatoes, 7d.—total, 3s.; to interest, 6d.

"MOTHER" LENDS BIG SUMS—

The total amount which "mother" lends in one week is really surprising. With dozens of customers all borrowing, few less than 10s. each week, the sum soon reaches formidable proportions, and the heavy interest charged soon makes great things possible even to a small beginner. One person, a very small shopkeeper, actually lent out over £30 regularly every week. The interest paid amounted to over £4 weekly, and now, after several years, that person has bought two or three rows of houses, and is well on the way to become the largest property-owner in the neighbourhood. The money-lending business is still carried on, while nearly the whole of the proceeds from the houses is banked to buy more.

"Mother" usually surrounds herself with a vulgar show of wealth quite out of keeping with the neighbourhood in which she lives. Be-jewelled and be-ringed, she sits amid the profusion of high-class furniture with which her little front room will be packed, and hands out or receives back her money, and issues her mandates with the air of a princess.

—AND LIVES IN LUXURY.

A costly grand piano occupied one corner of the room in which the writer once found one of these majestic creatures. The lady herself, by the profusion of her ornaments, fairly took one's breath away. A fine suite of furniture, a magnificent pile carpet, a side-board, costing fully twenty-five guineas, the wall packed with oil-paintings, and every nook and corner with the gaudiest of Worcester porcelain, completed a picture as astonishing to the beholder as no doubt impressive to the lady's customers.

In the immediate neighbourhood of a certain tobacco factory, which has lately come into much prominence, there are no fewer than five of these lady Shylocks, each of whom is reaping a rich harvest from employees, and others who prefer to pay twopence in the shilling, rather than endeavour to save the one week's wages, which would make them independent of "mother," and save their pockets several shillings weekly.

Only Wanted Half.

THE ten-year-old daughter of a portly lady seemed overjoyed when her mother promised to take her to a concert on the following evening, and, rushing off to her little writing-desk, produced her diary and made a few notes in it.

"I should dearly like to see what the darling girl has confided in her diary," said the mother to her husband when the child had gone to bed. "What do you think?"

"Oh, read it by all means!" he answered. "It's sure to be something sweetly innocent."

So the portly lady found the newly-blotted entry, which read as follows:

"Tuesday: Am going to a concert to-morrow with mother. Wish I could leave half of her at home. It's so uncomfortable to sit on the edge of a chair all night."

HARRIET: "Doesn't Julia use a good deal of face powder?"

Jenny: "Face powder! She ought to belong to the Plasterers' Union."

"Oh, you know, I'm not like an ordinary clerk. I talk to the members of the firm just as I do to you."

His Intended: "Oh, good gracious! George, you don't really, do you?"

MAGISTRATE: "I seem to know your face!"

Prisoner: "Yus; I was boys together."

Magistrate: "Nonsense!"

Prisoner: "Yus, we was. We're both about the same age, so we must have bin boys together!"

TOWNS WHICH REFUSE INDUSTRIES.

Some are so Conservative that they won't Allow Factories to be Erected.

ONE might imagine that it is the aim of every ambitious town to be a hive of busy workers, and to blow forth into a rich manufacturing centre, like Sheffield, Birmingham, and scores of other towns which owe their eminence to trade. But, strangely enough, some towns scorn the prosperity which comes of commerce, and have again and again declined to accept great industries. Cathedral towns, as a rule, have a great objection to big industries. York, Canterbury, Exeter, and Winchester have all at different times resolutely set their faces against being enriched by big trades which were offered them.

Some short time back the South-Eastern Railway directors proposed to benefit Canterbury by establishing immense workshops on the outskirts of that city, and never dreamt but that the local authorities, anxious for the prosperity the trade would bring, would jump at the offer. The workshops would have found employment for thousands of hands, who would naturally have brought money into Canterbury by paying houses, paying rates, and buying clothing and provisions. Yet the city not only declined to accept the proposal, but raised so many objections that the company finally decided to settle at Ashford.

It is almost impossible to compute the amount of money Canterbury lost in this way, but it must amount to many thousands of pounds per annum. Canterbury's idea was, of course, that the workshops would improve the city's dignity, but would introduce a material element which would drive away many of those who form the better portion of Canterbury's respectable population.

The South-Western Railway was treated in the same way by another Cathedral city, Winchester, years ago. The S.W.R. wanted to set up large works at Winchester, which would have made that old town a prosperous industrial centre. Winchester did not so much object to the proposed railway as it objected to the precedent; it was afraid that the works were admitted, other big industries would come clamouring at its doors, demanding admission, and the city would develop into a common place like London, Sheffield, or Birmingham. So it held out against the railway, which subsequently had to find its workshops elsewhere. Winchester also refused an offer from the Government to set up an industry in the city, which, having no taste for commercialism, would rather be reduced to the Cathedral than be converted into an industrial centre.

Such towns as Scarborough, Cheltenham, Harrogate, Eastbourne, and a dozen other fashionable residential towns share with cathedral cities the prejudice against industries, and not only hold their gates against what be encroaching manufactories, but sometimes even go so far as to endeavour to stamp out those trades which have, despite them, obtained a footing within their aristocratic boundaries.

Of course, in very many cases the local authorities might be defied, and the manufactories set up, the opposition notwithstanding. But this would not be a wise step, because it is within the powers of local authorities to make things exceedingly unpleasant. Industries have before now been driven out of towns where they established themselves, despite local authorities, by systematic opposition, and have suffered very severely in consequence.

Owners of certain manufactories which certain towns wish to be rid of are constantly being annoyed by prosecutions for every trifling offence, often committed by accident or oversight. Local authorities have even been known to raise the rates to hit at a manufactory, and having at last got rid of their bugbear, have at once reduced the rates sufficiently to correspond with the unnecessary increase, for which the other ratepayers are thereby compensated.

Gas and water rates have also been raised in the same way, so that the unhappy manufacturer has bitterly rued the day he forced the town to accept his industry. And such tactics, of course, hit at him in a double sense, for they touch him directly and indirectly by their effect upon his employees, who may even have to demand increased wages to enable them to pay the high rates.

Thus, having to pay inflated wages, rates for town water and gas, and frequently being "dropped upon" for smoking chimneys, for the most trifling offences against sanitary and factory laws, the fact is brought home to him that he must either hie himself elsewhere, at perhaps enormous expense and heavy loss of trade, or allow himself to be sooner or later ruined. And the possibility of such proceedings on the part of local authorities is so well understood that very wisely few industrial concerns are ever forced upon towns unwilling to accept them.

IF YOU'VE FAILED

in business, it's perhaps because you have taken up the wrong work. You should ascertain from an unbiased person the real bent of your mind, and to do this you should send a specimen of your handwriting to RAND, 23 Pearson's Buildings, Fleet Street, London, W.C., enclosing six penny stamps and a stamped addressed envelope.

"As a Man Sows."

POWERFUL
NEW SERIAL.

Beware the woman with ruddy hair,
For her hate is red, and she weaveth a snare
That spellleth woe to Malyon's heir.

Extract from a document in the possession of
the Malyon family.

By the author of
"Fettered Lives."

HOW THE STORY OPENS.

GILBERT MALYON, Sir Royle Malyon's son and heir, has been untrue to Nell Riordan, a cottager's daughter living on his father's estate. Fear of Luke Riordan has preyed on Gilbert Malyon that he has exiled himself to an obscure sea-side place in Normandy, where he passes under the name of Geoffrey Marsh. His dual identity is known only to Jonas Grice, a money-lending solicitor. One night, Malyon, cycling in Normandy under his alias, is overtaken by a storm, and seeks shelter at the first house he encounters. He peers through a chink in the shuttered window. A ghastly sight paralyses him. A man lies back in a chair, dead, his shirt-front red with blood. Then a woman glides in and fires the room by dashing the lamp to the ground. Gilbert Malyon recoils away from the window, misses his foothold, and falls. As he rises a lightning flash splits the dark. A woman is moving towards him. Only a brief second of light; but her beautiful, cruel face—surrounded by red-gold hair—is painted indelibly on his mind. Then he is stunned by a blow from behind.

Sir Royle Malyon reads an account of a grim mystery, the mystery of La Maison Rouge, near Bonneville, in Normandy. He little dreams that the Geoffrey Marsh who figures in the narrative is his son. It is a complete mystery. Fire has swallowed up all trace of the crime. The murdered man was a Mr. Murthwaite, an eccentric recluse. The investigation is in the hands of Charbonel, a famous French detective.

A year passes. Nell Riordan has died, and is buried in Rushford churchyard. Sir Royle is on the eve of marriage with a beautiful woman with red-gold hair, a widow he has met abroad. Next day as Sir Royle leaves the church, his bride on his arm, she suddenly pauses, and stares horror-stricken towards the Malyon vault. Carved in the granite are the words—"Murder will out!"

The scene changes to London. Jack Halward, bound for America to sell his ranch in order to realise his capital wherewith to get married, is saying good-bye to Grace Deane, his fiancée. She is returning sorrowfully to Blackley's, the big shop where she is employed, when an attractive, good-looking young man saves her from being run over. It is Gilbert Malyon, who has secretly come to London to raise money. He introduces himself as Geoffrey Marsh. When Halward returns, six months later, Grace has eloped, leaving a letter asking for forgiveness. She has married Gilbert Malyon as Geoffrey Marsh, knowing nothing of his real identity. Halward goes out into the night broken-hearted. He finds himself in a slum. He rescues a woman from a drunken seaman, who is kept at bay by another woman. She is Flash Meg.

After he has gone, Flash Meg makes her way to a second-hand furniture shop, in none too respectable a quarter, owned by Bartholomew Boote. Mr. Boote has a visitor, who leaves stealthily without being seen by Flash Meg. It is Reuben Grimwood, M.A., Sir Royle's secretary.

A year elapses. Grace Deane, now Grace Marsh, is a mother of a little son. She little dreams that he is a Malyon and next heir after his father to the Malyon estates. She knows her husband's true character now. Lady Malyon is also a mother. She loves her son fiercely. She hates Gilbert Malyon, whom she has never seen, for standing between her child and the succession to the title and estates.

A caravan is drawn up outside Rushford. Its occupant whispers the name of "Grace" in a reverie.

Lady Malyon questions her husband about Gilbert. He shows her a photograph. She turns white as death. At that moment the butler enters and tells Sir Royle that Gilbert has arrived and is in the library.

"That face!" she hisses, staring at the photograph after Sir Royle has left to interview his son. Then she remembers her own photograph stands on a table in the library.

Lady Malyon steals out into the night. She must find out what is passing in the library. As she nears the windows, a figure, unperceived, creeps away into the shrubbery. She overhears a conversation between Sir Royle and Gilbert. Gilbert has committed forgery. Sir Royle is willing to buy back the forgery, and make him a liberal allowance, if he will consent to the cutting of the entail. But it will be invalid if he, Gilbert, is married and has legitimate issue. Gilbert Malyon denies his wife and child. Then he sees the photograph. He snatches it up. "In Heaven's name, who's this woman?" Sir Royle answers "My wife!" Gilbert has recognised the photograph. It is the woman of La Maison Rouge!

He is on the point of revealing the truth to his father when he remembers that, if he does so, he will betray himself. He will have to make known the fact that he is the Geoffrey Marsh connected with the Bonneville mystery, and Geoffrey Marsh is married and has a son. For the sake of the money his father has offered him, he means to give wife and child the slip. Grace Marsh knows nothing of his real identity. As he drives away to the station he tugs at a ring on the little finger of his left hand; but cannot draw it over the knuckle. It is a thick ring. The two hands that clasp together draw apart, and beneath are two hearts on which are engraved the words "Grace—Geoffrey. Married. Sept. 16th, 1900."

Grace Marsh is living, broken-hearted, at Vilneux, a little village in Normandy. She is visited by Charbonel, the famous French detective, who asks her to ask her husband, when he returns, to send him word whether the woman of La Maison Rouge, when she fired the house by dashing the lamp to the ground, used her right hand or her left.

The occupant of the caravan outside Rushford proves to be Jack Halward. On his way there he had given a lift to Luke Riordan.

It was Riordan who stole away from the library window at Lady Malyon's approach, but not before he recognised Gilbert, for whom he has hunted for well-nigh two years.

The train that Gilbert Malyon anticipates catching no longer stops at Rushford Station, owing to a recent alteration in the time-table. He finds himself stranded, and determines to walk to Wellborough, the nearest large town.

Halward, in a sleepless mood, strolls along the station road. Suddenly revolver shots and cries for help ring out from the darkness. He discovers Gilbert Malyon, stabbed twice, in a dying condition. He carries him to his caravan. Gilbert whispers the name of Luke Riordan, then—"Warn the governor—photograph—that the woman of La Maison Rouge—God help him!" And after that he whispers—"Tell the governor—it was a lie—entail—my wife and child!" With his last breath he asks Halward to take care of his wife and child. The news of Gilbert's death is borne to the Hall. Lady Malyon tells herself that her child is heir now!

Meantime, in London, Flash Meg informs Bartholomew Boote that she is going to take a holiday and is about to set out for Rushford with some show-people, friends of hers.

Lady Malyon's two thoughts now are that her child is heir and the danger that threatened from Gilbert is averted. She is in the library when the butler enters and announces that Mr. Halward wishes to see Sir Royle. He falters out that Mr. Gilbert spoke his last words in Mr. Halward's arms.

Halward tells them what passed between himself and Gilbert, and Sir Royle promises that justice shall be done to the wife and child. The coachman who had driven Gilbert to the station hands a cigar-case, which he had found in the carriage, to Grimwood, to give to Sir Royle. Grimwood finds inside it a certificate of Gilbert's marriage under the name of Geoffrey Marsh, a letter from Grace, and an address at Vilneux.

Flash Meg accompanies her friends, the Tuckers, to Rushford Fair, where she again meets Halward.

Reuben Grimwood receives a letter from Bartholomew Boote from Vilneux. He tells Lady Malyon that he has proofs of Gilbert's marriage, and that he has a son living. The price of his silence is her submission to him, to which she consents.

Meanwhile, at Vilneux Boote makes friends with Grace, and to get a firm hold on her, according to Grimwood's instructions, he steals the little money she has saved.

Halward is visited at Rushford by an old friend, who recognises a photo of Gilbert Malyon as being Geoffrey Marsh, who with his wife and child he had met in Normandy. The two go to the Hall, where they tell Lady Malyon and Grimwood (Sir Royle being indisposed) the story, and the promise is given that the wife and child shall be sought. In Grimwood Halward recognises a scoundrel he has previously met, therefore distrusts him, and arranges to go to Vilneux himself.

A wreck takes place off Vilneux. Among the passengers saved are Halward and Luke Riordan. They are borne to Madame Fauvel's house. Grace goes into the room where Halward is lying unconscious. In his delirium he talks of her, and then someone knocks at the door. It is time for Grace to leave for London, from where she has received a telegram purporting to be from her husband. Boote is to accompany her, and has lent her the money necessary for the journey.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A Strange Meeting. How Halward Came to Vilneux.

THE knock fell on unheeding ears. Grace was still staring down at the bandaged, shadowed face. She must leave him! He would never know, perhaps, how near she had been, and it were better, far better! Yet if only she could have stayed a little longer, watching by his side, unseen, long enough to know that he were out of danger! But it must not be! Her husband had summoned her. She must go to him!

The cruel irony of it all! The telegram was a cowardly, heartless forgery. The man whom she fancied she was going to meet lay stark in his coffin. Pitiless fate was dragging her away from the man who, though he little dreamt whom it was that he sought, had purposely set out to find her; the man who might have saved her from dangers ahead, and righted her and her child!

Again a low knocking on the door. Grace heard this time.

The sleeper's lips were moving; but no sounds came from them.

He would never know; no one would ever know! Grace bent down—printed a kiss on the bandage that swathed Jack Halward's head. It was no act of infidelity to the husband whom she believed to be alive, nor of treachery to his wife—she had heard his murmur of a wife and child! It was a kiss of bitter, repentant remorse, the kiss of one who was, perhaps, bidding farewell for the last time!

"God forgive me!" she breathed out chokingly. "God save and guard you, Jack!"

The sleeper, half-dreaming, half-delirious, moved slightly. In his dream-delirium it seemed that Grace Deane had come to him, and was standing beside him.

"You, Grace?" he babbled. "It's awfully good of you to come. Bless you—dear sweetheart! But I'm as tough

as nail. I shall be all right. Not much longer now, and I shall be back, and you will have done with Blackley's for good! Long to go out West again, one of these days? Not I! What, when I've got you, little girl, when I've got you?"

He laughed softly. Grace had sprung away from the bed. She could not see for the blinding tears. For a moment she had fancied that he had awakened and recognised her; but the last words told her that he was still dreaming.

The door-handle rattled, turned, then the door opened. Bartholomew Boote thrust in his head. He beckoned Grace with a forefinger.

It had come; she must go! But for a moment she did not stir. Her eyes pitiously sought the shadowed bed. It seemed so cruel, so heartless to have to leave him lying there! Agony was racking her soul!

"Mrs. Marsh, Mrs. Marsh!" whispered Bartholomew Boote, only his head within the room. "Don't think me callous; but our train! There is none too much time!"

The light was dim; he could not see the expression on her face, but he saw her sink on her knees beside the bed and become merged in the shadow round it.

It did not seem unnatural to Bartholomew Boote. Some people had a way of dropping on to their knees—especially women—when illness or an accident was anywhere in the neighbourhood, so he mentally remarked.

Grace rose up, then, setting her white lips and pressing a hand to her heart as though its ache were almost more than she could bear, moved unsteadily towards the door—one hand outstretched as though she were blind, and must needs feel her way!

On the threshold she paused, turned, glanced back for the last time!

Thus had Grace entered into Jack Halward's life again; thus she passed from it. And he had not known!

The door closed to. She was gone.

Bartholomew Boote had stepped away from the door. He had slept through the commotion of the early morning, and had only just learnt of the collision, and of the presence of two survivors in the cottage. He had gathered a few facts from Riordan, who still sat brooding by the kitchen fire; but he had not heard the name of the unconscious man from whose side he had summoned Grace. He only saw Grace's face clearly when she stepped out into the passage. Its expression was more than one of sympathetic distress, rather one of poignant agony. Those beady eyes of his were singularly observant.

"The poor fellow is still unconscious?" he whispered.

"Yes—yes."

Grace moved past him into the kitchen, to Madame Fauvel. "Madame," she breathed out chokingly, "go—please go to him!"

Then away to her room.

Boote, his wrinkled face more wrinkled than ever with a puzzled expression, stepped out of the cottage, and stared thoughtfully at the sea. Was it possible that this man was known to her?

He was plucking at a side-whisker when the postman came up to the cottage.

Yes, there was a letter for Monsieur!

Boote tore open the envelope. The message it contained was brief, laconic, and unsigned.

"Delay may be fatal. Halward has left—probably for Vilneux."

Boote whistled softly, and tore up the letter into tiny fragments. He had heard all about Halward from Reuben Grimwood, as well as having read about him in the papers. Halward must be the danger that Grimwood had warned him against in his telegram. The letter must have been dispatched very shortly after.

Boote returned into the kitchen. Riordan was the only occupant now.

"I suppose," said Boote, "you don't know the name of the poor unconscious fellow?"

"Yes, Halward!"

Bartholomew Boote stepped out into the passage very quickly. Mrs. Marsh must not be allowed to enter that room again! Unconscious, she had said. She could have learnt nothing from him so far. Then he recalled the look of agony on her face. Was it possible that he was known to her? Or had she learnt something?

Madame Fauvel had taken Grace's place by Halward's bed. When the sounds of wheels penetrated into the room, she rose up, glanced down at the still unconscious figure, and then crept out of the room. Her lodgers were leaving; she must bid them farewell. She closed the door behind her. Grace, heavily veiled, stood in the passage, little Geoff in her arms. Mr. Boote stood between her and the bedroom door.

"Madame," whispered Grace, "how—how is he?"

"Still asleep or unconscious, I know not which!"

"Madame—Madame, I want to speak to you alone for a moment!"

"Mrs. Marsh, Mrs. Marsh," said Bartholomew Boote, rather quickly. "I don't want to hurry you, flurry you, but we haven't a moment to spare. And I know it's very important for you to catch this train. You ought to come, you ought to come now. We shall only do it by the skin of our teeth, if by that!"

"Only half a minute!" she whispered desperately.

Madame Fauvel followed her into her room. The door closed behind them.

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Boote's beady eyes glittered unpleasantly. He stepped up to the door; but conversation within was being carried on in a whisper.

"Madame," breathed out Grace, "write to me, and tell me how he is. But—but do not let him know that I have asked you to do this. Promise me, promise me! I—I knew him before I was married, but—ah, but you are a woman, Madame, you will perhaps understand. I have no right to come back into his life again!"

Sobs were choking her voice now. The words were scarcely audible.

Madame was a woman, and could imagine something of the nature of the situation.

"You do not wish him to know that you have been here?"

"No—no!"

It were better. Why cause needless pain?

"But," said Madame a little unsteadily—her heart was moved, "if he should hear your name?"

"He would not know it; but do not let him know that my other name was—was Grace!"

She thrust a slip of paper into Madame's hand. Her future movements were uncertain now. She had intended to go to Miss Holt whom Mr. Boote had recommended; but now everything depended on her husband. The address on the paper was that of a London post-office.

Could only Mr. Boote, who was straining his ears outside, have heard what had been said, he would have been mightily relieved!

Madame Fauvel was weeping now. She embraced Grace and little Geoff simultaneously.

"Ah, my poor Madame! All this I will do!"

Grace swayed towards the door, then stopped, a look of agony and irresolution on her white face. If she could only look upon him for a last time. She might never see him again!

"Madame," she choked, "will you hold my little boy for— for a moment?"

Halward lay alone in the darkened bedroom. His eye-lids began to flicker, then opened. The look in the eyes was dull at first, but it slowly brightened with the light of awakening consciousness. But the environments of the life-like dream still seemed about him.

"Are you there, Grace?" he whispered. "Are you there?"

As the faint words left his lips, just as Madame Fauvel was about to take the child from Grace's arms, Bartholomew Boote knocked sharply, and entered Grace's room.

"Mrs. Marsh, Mrs. Marsh!" he exclaimed excitedly but not irritably, "you must come! You simply must! Auf Wiedersehen, Madame—no, I mean au revoir!"

He snatched up Madame's hand, kissed it with great, but hurried gallantry; then, without being in the least way offensive, circled an arm round Grace, and led her gently, but firmly, out of the cottage. He believed in acting quickly on occasions. It gave less opportunity for thought.

"Don't think me rude for interrupting you, Mrs. Marsh, but you've been upset by this terrible business! You are stunned, dazed—but the train, we must catch the train!"

The faint rattle of wheels penetrated into the room where Jack Halward lay. He was conscious now. Everything had come back with a rush. What had gone before—the fancy that he had been stabbed in a street fray in the East End of London, and that Grace had come to him and was bending over his bed—was only a dream!

Yes, he remembered all now. The rush for the boats, and the struggle on the upper deck; Luke Riordan, and the hand-grip just before the ship sank; the downward suction, and the fight up to the surface; then clutching something, and being dragged out, and inscribed by an arm. After that, a blank.

"Where am I?" he muttered. "Who pulled me out of the water? I owe my life to someone!"

He tried to rise, but a stabbing pain, accompanied by a ghastly feeling of nausea and giddiness, shot through his brain. He made no second attempt, but lay still, haunted by the memories of the awful night. How many souls had been saved? What of the ship that had run into them? Then his thoughts harked back to Riordan. It was passing strange, that grimly dramatic recognition on the deck of the sinking ship. In his own mind, Halward had tried Riordan, not by an abstract standard of justice, but on the touchstone of his own feelings. He had tried to imagine himself in his place. It had been a terrible act; but the provocation had been terrible, also. Of the two men, rightly or wrongly, Halward looked upon Gilbert Malyon as the greater criminal. For Luke Riordan there was much pity in his heart. What had happened to him? Had he been summoned to the bar of the great Tribunal to answer the charge against him? Would the fact that he had forgotten himself and had fought for the lives of others on the deck of the sinking ship, count for nothing?

The door opened and Madame Fauvel, her eyes bearing visible traces of tears, entered quietly. She started when she saw that Halward was awake.

"Ah, my poor fellow," she said volubly in French, "how do you feel now? You must have nourishment at once. It is the doctor's instructions!"

Though he was badly out of practice, Halward understood and could speak French. A year in France, as well as one in Germany, had formed part of his education.

"You are very kind," he answered feebly, "but I do not wish to cause unnecessary trouble. My head is a little painful, but it will pass off. Where am I?"

"At Vilneux."

Halward turned his head slowly and painfully, and stared at Madame Fauvel.

"Vilneux?"

"Yes, monsieur."

Halward's bruised face gave no clue to the amount of pain that he was suffering. He crushed it under. He was not going to allow it to come between him and his objects, if he could help it. He did not pause to wonder on the coincidence that had brought him to Vilneux, his intended destination, the Vilneux to which Reuben Grimwood had dispatched a telegram addressed to Boote, care of Madame Fauvel. He came straight, abruptly to the point.

"Do you know a Madame Fauvel?" he whispered.

"But," exclaimed Madame, with a start of surprise, "I am Madame Fauvel!"

Halward's eyes brightened; then he suddenly set his lips as a spasm of pain stabbed through his head.

"Is there," he whispered, with something of a hiss, "is there someone called Boote staying here?"

"Ah!" More astonishment on the part of Madame, expressed by intonation and gesture. "But you know him? But he has gone—left for London, perhaps half-an-hour ago!"

There was another short, silent wrestle with pain before Halward spoke. He was vaguely conscious that he was growing weaker. He did not know the reason, and Madame Fauvel did not notice the dark stain that was slowly spreading over the pillow.

"Is there"—the words sounded laboured—"is there a Mrs. Marsh—Mrs. Geoffrey Marsh—staying here?"

"You know her?" gasped out Madame Fauvel. From what Grace had told her she had taken it for granted that the name "Mrs. Geoffrey Marsh" would be meaningless to him.

"No, but I want her!"

"But," said Madame Fauvel hesitatingly, "if you do not know Madame Marsh, why should you want her? Besides, she has gone! She left for England with Monsieur Boote!"

She had begged the question, and answered it! Halward was conscious of a numbness stealing over him, of a fading away of his senses; but he had grasped the situation—grasped the meaning of that telegram dispatched from Rushford by Reuben Grimwood.

He had reached Vilneux too late!

Reuben Grimwood and Co. had won the first point in the game!

"Ciel!" suddenly cried Madame Fauvel.

Halward's eyes had closed. She saw the stain on the pillow now. It was blood! The sight of it robbed her of her self-possession. With a shrill exclamation, she darted out of the room across to the kitchen, where she had left Luke Riordan. Her husband and his men had put out to sea again—there might be others clinging to wreckage in the channel.

But the kitchen was empty. A silver coin glittered on the table. A couple of blankets lay across the back of a chair; the torn clothes, that had been drying before the fire, gone!

Madame Fauvel wrung her hands helplessly. She would have done far better had she returned to Halward, and endeavoured to staunch the wound that had started to bleed afresh; but she had lost her head. She rushed from the kitchen towards the open front-door. Someone must go for a doctor!

Ah! The blessed Virgin be praised!

A huge figure, so bulky that it seemed to blot out all the light, had suddenly filled up the doorway.

Charbonel, the famous detective!

He was dressed precisely the same as on the occasion of his former visit to Vilneux—the straight-brimmed stove-pipe hat, the alpaca coat, the trousers very baggy round the hips, and very tight indeed round the ankles. He was breathing a little wheezily as though the very leisurely walk from the station had rather taxed his energies. A placid smile was on the jowled, fat face, with its little moustache, waxed and upturned, and close-trimmed, pointed beard. In one arm, holding him much as one might hold a baby, he carried General Boulanger, whose resemblance to an animated pon-wiper had not diminished.

"Quick!" cried Madame Fauvel. "Follow me! He is bleeding!"

And she darted back towards the room where Halward lay.

The promptitude with which Monsieur Charbonel pocketed General Boulanger, the speed and the lightness of tread with which he followed, were so remarkable that, had anyone been present to witness, he would have surely rubbed his eyes and wondered if this could possibly be the same individual who, but a moment before, wheezing asthmatically and looking hopelessly unwieldy, had filled up the doorway. It was a revelation!

He entered the room, and simultaneously seemed to grasp the situation.

"Quick!" he cried, "back with the curtain! Go—the doctor!"

He bent over the bed, raised up Halward, whipped off the bandage, then pressed hard on the wound with three fingers, compressing the artery from which the blood was flowing.

For a second time, within twelve hours, Jack Halward's life had been saved!

This time, it had been by Monsieur Raoul Charbonel, of the Paris detective force, who, curiously enough, had also come to Vilneux in the hope of finding Mrs. Geoffrey Marsh, or her husband. He had not received an answer to his question—whether, on the night of the murder, when she fired the house by dashing the lamp to the floor, the woman of La Maison Rouge used her right or her left hand!

It was a question on which a great deal depended.

When the doctor arrived, Charbonel proved of much more assistance than Madame Fauvel. It was necessary to ligature the artery. The elephantine man helped, with a delicacy and tenderness of touch that was as remarkable as his previous unexpected display of agility.

"Mon pauvre enfant!" he ejaculated softly, and more than once. "Mon pauvre enfant!"

And though the voice might be wheezy, it had a peculiarly sympathetic ring.

After the doctor had done his work and gone, Charbonel did not leave the room; but, having first carefully examined the legs of the chair to ascertain if they were up to his weight, sat down by the bed, and, having taken General Boulanger from his pocket and placed him on his knees (where he was invisible), proceeded to ask Madame Fauvel one or two whispered questions. He had heard of the collision in the Channel at Bonnevillence whence he had come. Madame whispered out very quickly and volubly all that had happened, not only concerning her husband's rescue, but also of Mrs. Marsh's and Mr. Boote's departure, and the little scene between herself and Grace, in which a glimpse of a past sad romance had been revealed. Charbonel seemed far more intent on fondling the General than listening to the narrative, but that was a little habit of his.

"Poor child!" he whispered wheezily, "poor child! So

sweet, so amiable, so loving, such a devoted little mother! But, alas! tied to a desperately bad fellow of a husband!"

He had long ago gauged "Geoffrey Marsh's" character. Then he shrugged his shoulders. He had come purposely to Vilneux to see Mrs. Marsh, but it did not matter. She would have left her address. Perhaps he would go to England.

Halward moved, and brushed off some of the bed clothing. Charbonel pocketed the General, rose up, and covered him over again.

"Poor child! But his splendid physique will save him. Magnificent! What a chest! Poor child!"

"Eh, what's that?" The voice came from the bed.

"Ah!" exclaimed Charbonel, "he recovers!"

He bent again over the bed. Halward's eyes were open now and staring up at him.

"Madame, the beef-tea with cognac!"

Madame Fauvel left the room.

The sublime and the ridiculous are constantly overlapping. Halward, staring up blankly at first, gradually became conscious of a rubicund, comical face peering down into his own. As the face became more distinct, it seemed also to become more comical. A smile spread across Halward's battered features.

"Ah! Zat is well! Zat is so all quite right. 'Laugh and get well,' says the proverbial!"

There was not much laugh left in Halward, not over much life; but he laughed—ever so faintly. Then he closed his eyes again, and lay for awhile in a dazed, unthinking state. Then, slowly his memory awakened, and all returned to him. He opened his eyes. The same rubicund face was bending over him. The next moment an arm raised him gently up, and a spoon was placed between his lips.

"Zis will do you a world of good!"

Halward was feeling weak as a kitten, and limp as wet string; but after Charbonel had administered a cupful of beef-tea and brandy, and had laid him back again in the bed, his brain felt clearer.

"Thank you," he whispered. "It's awfully good of you. Who are you?"

"Charbonel, Raoul Charbonel, at your service!"

Charbonel? The name seemed familiar to Halward. He closed his eyes and thought for a moment. His brain refused to work quickly; but at last it responded. Yes, Charbonel was the name of the detective mentioned by Speedway in his account of the Mystery of La Maison Rouge.

"The detective?"

"Yes, zat is so."

There was a strain of bulldog tenacity in Halward's nature. He refused to be deterred by physical pain and weakness. He had set himself a task, and he meant to go through with it. It was uppermost in his mind now.

"Then you—you knew Geoffrey Marsh?" he said faintly.

"Indeed, yes! I come here to see Mrs. Marsh, but too late!"

"And I was too late!"

Charbonel thought of the romance alluded to by Madame Fauvel, and held his peace.

"I say!"—Halward was speaking again. There was a suppressed ring of excitement in the feeble voice—"when you last saw Geoffrey Marsh was he wearing any rings of any sort?"

Charbonel had again produced the General from his pocket, and was fondling him. Without hesitating, without seemingly giving the matter a moment's thought, he answered—

"Ah, yes! On ze little finger of ze left hand he wear a gold ring, on which were two hands clasped together."

Then he turned the General over on to his back, and tickled his chest with a fat finger.

"But why zese questions?"

"Why?" whispered Halward from between his set lips.

"Why? Because I wanted proof positive that Geoffrey Marsh was Gilbert Malyon. And I've got it now!"

Charbonel thrust the General into his pocket, rose up, and bent over the bed. There was a faint trace of excitement on the fat face.

"Do you mean to tell me zat you believe zat Marsh was ze Gilbert Malyon of whose murder I have read?"

"Yes! And I want to find his widow and child!"

"Ah!" ejaculated Charbonel, "I comprehend, I understand you. I have read, I have follow in ze papers. You seek ze little heir!"

"Yes! You've hit it—that's it!"

"But," said Charbonel, "one moment. I do not deny you. I do not affirm you—you have knowledge of zings zat I have not; but Madame Fauvel tell me, just a few minute ago, zat only yesterday Mrs. Marsh receive a telegraph from her husband, that she travel to England to meet him. What think of zat, mister?"

Halward's whispered and laboured reply was expressed in a single word—

"Forgery!"

CHAPTER XIX.

How Grace Came to Hilmyer's Row.—Bartholomew Boote Extinguishes a Match.

"ULLO!" "Ere you are, back again, Meg! I 'opes I sees you well, after 'aving 'ad a fust-class time!"

Jim the Dandy had been left in charge of the shop in Finch-brook Lane during Bartholomew Boote's absence on the Continent.

His pasty, decidedly criminal, face had coloured up as Flash Meg, just returned from her holiday with Liza and her husband and wearing an amber-coloured scarf, entered the shop. She had come back with an indefinable ache somewhere in the region of the heart, and a feeling that life was rather a blank; that it did not matter very much what happened in the future. She was a fool, so she told herself, to fall in love with a man who was miles above her, to whom she could never possibly be anything; with a man who, if he should ever learn what she really was, would regret ever having spoken to her. But love is not quenched by reasoning. And it was love with her—great love.

"Thank you, Jim!" she answered, shaking hands with a suspicion of a sigh, and recalling a certain cocoanut shy and the strong figure that stood beside her. "It was proper while it lasted; but there, all good things must have an end, so what's the use of grumbling?"

Jim the Dandy glanced at her adoringly out of the corners of his shifty eyes. The tinge of sunburn was on her beautiful

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face, the life of open air had brought a warm colour to her cheeks.

"Meg!" he whispered, "you look something lovely!"
"Jim," she answered sternly, "none of that!"
"But I can't help myself," he went on huskily, "so it's no use trying, Meg. Since you've been away, I've you by any chance thought of altering your mind with regard to my 'opes? Can't you bring yourself to look upon me as something more than a brother; rather, so to speak, from a matrimonial point of view?"

"No, Jim, it's no use asking me that!"—she shook her head—"If I could, I would, but, honestly, I can't. Not that I wish to hurt your feelings!"

A sullen expression crept over Jim's pasty face. His eyes fastened on the amber-coloured tie.

"Ho! That's new. Who give you that?"

"Never you mind, Jim!"

Jim scowled as he conjured up a shadowy vision of a rival, and looked more criminal than ever.

"Some bloke, I s'pose!"

"No!" answered Meg, a little hotly. "Not a bloke—a gentleman!"

Jim the Dandy sneered spitefully.

"Ho, indeed! Gents don't as a rule make presents to gals of your sort for nothing!"

It was not exactly what he said, but the nasty way he said it. Smack!

Flash Meg had given him a box on the ears that caused him to spin round on his heels, and almost off them.

"There!" she cried, "One moment you ask me to be your wife, and the next you dare to speak to me like that, as if, as if—"

She did not finish her sentence. Her eyes were blazing like live coal. She had drawn herself up to her full height.

"You," she went on, "you, you're not fit to black the shoes of him that gave me this!"

She pressed a hand on the amber-coloured scarf; then swung round and swept out of the shop.

Jim the Dandy rubbed his inflamed ear.

"Yah!" he hissed, with an oath and an opprobrious epithet.

"If it ain't me, it shan't be nobody else!"

Hillyer's Row, where Flash Meg lodged, had been christened "Row" because it was too narrow to be dignified by the name of street.

There was just room for a vehicle to pass through, provided always that it did not encounter another vehicle coming from the opposite direction.

When Bartholomew Boote had told Grace that Miss Holt let lodgings, it was a pure piece of fabrication on his part.

She rented a combined room at No. 34, though there were other rooms to let on the premises.

Her one room was a pattern of neatness and cleanliness. When, still smarting under Jim's insinuation, she entered it, a letter in Boote's handwriting awaited her—the letter written at Vilneux.

She read it through twice.

"What's his game?" she muttered suspiciously. "When he starts being so polite, and using so much soft soap, there's generally mischief in the air!"

It was an artistically composed letter. It requested Margaret to engage rooms, in her own name, for a charming, distressed, young mother (with child—male sex) in straitened circumstances, and practically deserted by a cruel husband, whom Barty, out of the kindness of his heart, was probably escorting to London.

She was an innocent woman who knew nothing of the sordid, criminal side of life. Margaret would, Barty felt assured, do her best to comfort the young mother, and assist in taking care of the infant.

It would be a matter of business, private business, between Margaret and Bartholomew. He would bear the burden of all expenses, and her own remuneration should be not only just, but generous.

Though matters were not quite definitely settled, let her engage the rooms. She would hear further per telegram.

Flash Meg interviewed her landlady and made the necessary arrangements, but with the mental reservation that, should Mr. Boote be bent upon a game that she disapproved of, she would tell him so straight, and have nothing more to do with it.

A telegram that reached her that evening, ran thus—

"We shall probably arrive about midnight. Food ready. Milk for baby.—B.B."

Flash Meg, her amber-coloured scarf having been put away with reverential care, was sitting up alone, when a four-wheeler growled along the "Row," occasionally scraping a wheel against the pavement.

It was a dingy thoroughfare, the houses old and cramped, some of them with none too good a reputation.

Along the backs ran yards. On washing-days anyone so minded had ample opportunity of becoming acquainted with the stock and nature of the neighbours' household linen and underwear.

Flannellette predominated.

When, dead-weary with the long journey, heart and limbs aching, Grace, the child in her arms asleep, alighted at Victoria, expectant yet dreading, her husband was not there to meet her.

She had waited, Boote beside her, till the crowd had cleared away, but he was not there. Then she had broken down utterly.

Boote had done his best to comfort her. Some mistake; but it would all come right. But it was useless to wait. She must have rest; the child must have rest.

Things would look so much brighter in the morning. He would take her and the dear, tired little fellow to Miss Holt's. It might be homely there, humble in fact, but comfortable.

She was a good woman!

Grace had gone. Anything! Anywhere!

Flash Meg opened the street-door. Boote sprang jauntily from the cab, and assisted out Grace.

"Mrs. Marsh," he said quickly to Meg, "has had a grievous disappointment. She is terribly tired; but you, Miss Holt, I know will take care of her. I will see to the luggage."

"Let me take the kiddie!" said Flash Meg gently. By the light in the passage she had seen Grace's white, tear-stained face, suffering writ upon it in big letters, and the womanly tenderness latent in her wilful, but great heart had been awakened.

"Let me."

She gently took the child from Grace's aching arms; opened the shawl wrapped about him, and peered into his face.

"What a dear little kiddie!" she whispered. "Isn't he a great happiness to you?"

She saw Grace's swollen eyes fill with tears.

"But there, come along! Supper's ready, and I've got in the milk!"

"But," said Grace, a little dazedly, "did you expect us?" Boote, the baby's cot in his arms, had entered the passage. He had overheard.

"Yes, yes!" he said, rather hastily, "my doing, my doing. In case of accident, in case you should have nowhere to go to, I thought it just as well to make provision. I couldn't bear the thought of you and your little fellow being possibly stranded in London with nowhere definite to go to!"

"Hullo!" said Flash Meg to herself, "looks as if there was some sort of game on!"

The rooms Flash Meg had taken were tiny—a little sitting-room on the ground-floor, a bed-room on the first. After Geoff, without waking up, had absorbed a quantity of milk, and had been packed away in his cot, Grace made an effort to take some supper; but suddenly a great choking lump rose in her throat; she buried her face in her hands, and started to sob piteously.

"My dear Mrs. Marsh! But you mustn't—mustn't!" ejaculated Boote.

Flash Meg looked at him—only a look; but it spoke, said "Shut up, you humbug!" Then, springing to Grace, she put an arm round her, and led her gently from the room.

She was gone a long while. When she returned, Bartholomew Boote was smoking a cigar fixed in the meerschaum holder. She fastened her dark, penetrating eyes on his face.

"What's the game?" she said in a low voice.

Bartholomew Boote heaved a deep sigh.

"Margaret," he said pathetically, "can't you for once credit me with being possessed of a certain amount of the milk of human kindness? Something of the spirit and principles of Christianity? Some instinct of brotherly love and sympathy for those in distress?"

It was so well acted, despite the exaggerated style, that Meg was more than half convinced—but not quite. She put her hands on her hips, and eyed him doubtfully.

"We shall see!" she answered, "but this much—if there's any game being played against that poor, broken-hearted girl—that's all she is—or the kiddie, then if you think I'm going to stand by and see it done, you're making one of the biggest mistakes you've ever made in the whole course of your natural. So there! That's from me—straight!"

Shortly after, Boote set out for Pinchbeck Lane. He had left a message for Grace to the effect that he would be round early next morning.

"No," he muttered, "as it now stands the scheme's too unwieldy. Well, I shall be seeing Reube to-morrow, and we can discuss matters. But, from my point of view, with this fellow Halward nosing around, it strikes me forcibly that little Geoff's existence is not only superfluous and unnecessary, but a positive danger!"

He paused to re-light his cigar. The match fell to the ground, and lay there burning with a tiny flame.

"It could be done," he added thoughtfully, "done as easily as that!"

He had trodden out the tiny flame!

CHAPTER XX.

Flash Meg Overhears Part of a Conversation.

It was about eleven o'clock when, on the following morning, Boote called at 34 Hillyer's Row. The tiny little sitting-room in which he found Grace, with the child and Flash Meg, looked out upon a back yard.

The lower part of the window was plastered over with transparent paper that was supposed to represent stained glass—but was obviously not. It was all very different from the room at Vilneux, looking out upon sands and sea.

Grace, white as a ghost, and looking pitifully tired and broken, was dressed to go out. Flash Meg had promised to take care of little Geoff.

Grace was loth to leave him, but she had told herself that it must be done. She must be up and doing. She was intending to visit Blackley's.

She must obtain work; money must be earned. But she dreaded the prospect of long hours of absence from her child.

It was on this matter that Boote had called.

"Of course," he said, after greetings and kind inquiries, "I don't wish to interfere with your plans, Mrs. Marsh, but if you should care to work for me—embroidery, re-covering, needlework—please say so. You won't find me a hard task-master. And, of course, there would be this advantage to you—you could do your work here—you would be with your dear little fellow. Bless his little heart! How well, how bonny he looks this morning. He has no cares, no worries. He seems none the worse for the journey. But, Mrs. Marsh, you must please yourself!"

He glanced out into the back-yard. Some garments were drying on a clothes-line. His beady eyes twinkled a little.

"The outlook here," he went on, "is homely, the neighbourhood humble; but homeliness is not incompatible with honesty, and"—he eyed the garments again—"cleanliness, though here it is rather embarrassingly obvious, is, after all, next to godliness!"

Flash Meg was eyeing Boote. She said nothing, but her lips curled a little! She had—as she would have put it—taken to Mrs. Marsh and the dear little kiddie. Her womanly sympathy had been aroused. Of Grace's agony at Vilneux she knew nothing as yet; but she had learnt from Grace that her husband had failed to meet her, and that she had no idea where to write to him; that she was practically without friends in London, and that what money she possessed was borrowed.

Meg had been up early, had given Grace her breakfast in bed, and had helped to bath the child. She had done her best to comfort and encourage her.

Flash Meg had yet to learn that Mrs. Marsh was the woman Jack Halward had, and still loved!

Boote had manipulated matters wonderfully well—from his point of view. The future was uncertain. He was, for the most part, in ignorance of Halward's motives in setting out for Vilneux.

Grimwood's communications had been laconic and lacking in detail; but he felt, remembering the condition in which Halward had been left, that there was no immediate cause for anxiety. On the journey he had made quite certain that Halward had not been conscious while Grace was present.

He believed, from her obvious grief, that he had been connected in some way with her past, but there was no need to worry about that at present.

The temptation of being near her child proved too strong for Grace. She thanked Mr. Boote from the bottom of her heart. She would like to work for him if he thought she

would suit. At all events, she would like to try for a while.

When, presently, Boote departed, he started to hum softly to himself. He was pleased. Things were panning out nicely. Flash Meg, too, was working well, in spite of the slight flare-up of the evening before.

But he did not quite understand Flash Meg, for all the years he had known her.

Grace remained indoors for the rest of the day. Where was her husband? What steps should she take to find him? Should she advertise again in the papers? And what of the other man whom she had left lying unconscious at Vilneux? These were the thoughts that, in a monotonous, haunting cycle, raced through her burning brain.

She could not possibly hear from Madame Fauvel till the following day. But for her child and Flash Meg she felt that she must have gone mad!

It was about half-past nine in the evening when Flash Meg left to take some upholstery work that she had been busy upon, to the shop in Pinchbeck Lane.

The shop was still open. A gas-jet flared in the front; but the long interior, untidy with much furniture, was in places completely in darkness. Jim the Dandy was nowhere visible.

When she was a short distance away from the door that gave entrance to the room at the back, Flash Meg realised that her bootlace was undone. Stepping in between two big wardrobes, she put her foot on a roll of carpeting, and was in the act of tying up the lace when the door at the back opened, and a head—Boote's head—was thrust out. Meg had been inaudible, and was now completely invisible.

"All right, Reube, you may just as well pass out through the front. It'll save time, and there's no one about."

The words just reached Flash Meg. Who was Reube, in the name of goodness? Her curiosity was aroused. Mischievous of some sort! She straightened up, and stood silent.

A moment later, Boote, followed by a tall man, slightly stooping, and his face muffled up, emerged from the room. They moved slowly and were whispering.

Just past the place where Meg stood they came to a stop.

"If—if at any moment it might become necessary, you could manage it, Bartholomew?"

Meg heard. The voice was soft and oily, and, somehow, it reminded her of Boote's.

"Yes! But this business will mean a big outlay of money. Reube. How's the stock of corn?"

"There must be two or three thousand left there; but you can understand why I haven't drawn on it lately. Besides, there is another source, though I don't think it advisable to tap it just yet. You can understand that also."

"Certainly. You've wonderful nerve, Reube. To look at you one wouldn't think it. And, also, a wonderful eye for a pretty woman. I should like to see her. Reube, you sly dog, you! You always got the plums. I don't begrudge you. You deserved them. You played your cards better than I played mine!"

There was a moment's pause.

"But"—Boote was continuing—"I'm not quite sure that your present policy is right. Theoretically, perhaps, but not practically; I should risk it!"

"But it would mean the loss of my hold!"

"But you've got her!"

"Bartholomew, you don't know the woman!"

Another pause. Then the oily, soft voice continued again.

"I must go back to Rushford to-morrow; but I shall be back the day after. Could you contrive, within the next few days, to get the child away from the mother?"

Flash Meg caught her breath. Most of what had gone before had been unintelligible.

"Yes, that could be worked!" Boote was speaking now.

"But, after what happened at Vilneux—it was a close shave—I don't like the look of things. Take it from me, the child is not only superfluous, but a positive danger. If"—the voice was almost inaudible now—"if you should come to the same conclusion suddenly, let me know!"

"You, you could manage it without—without arousing suspicion?"

Flash Meg's heart was thumping against her ribs. Her hands were clenched up. A great horror and a great, fierce indignation filled her soul.

She was straining her ears now to catch the answer.

(To be continued.)

The story "Fettered Lives," which preceded this present serial, is still fresh in the minds of readers. It would be difficult for them to forget the able manner in which Mr. Crump, the clever little detective, unravelled the skein of mystery which entangled the lives of Esme Conyers and Rex Stanley.

Crump was always a warm-hearted little fellow, passionately fond of his little nephew and niece, for whom he used to be continually buying toys.

The incidents, however, which were related in "Fettered Lives," happened many years ago, and since then Crump has retired from the profession and spends most of his time roaming about the country. Freddy, his little nephew, has now grown up into a strapping young fellow, and has enlisted in the force in which his uncle so distinguished himself.

Mr. Crump, despite his retirement, always takes a keen interest in every criminal case that comes along, and, although he resolved never to take up crime investigation again professionally, he is finally drawn into one very remarkable case affecting the career of a fine young fellow who reminds him greatly of Rex Stanley.

The story of how Mr. Crump does his work is told in Mr. Henry Farmer's powerful new serial "Out of Much Tribulation," the opening chapters of which you will find on page 11 of supplement.

YOUNG BURGLAR: "These spoons ain't silver. They are the cheapest kind o' imitation."

Old Burglar: "That's lucky."

"Lucky?"

"Yes, take 'em along."

"What for?"

"The lorry of the house will be afeared to set the police arter us, lest they should find them spoons and describe 'em in the papers."



VIGIA-HUNTING is a form of sport that our jolly Jack Tars are not greatly enamoured of, albeit it frequently falls to their lot to have to practise it, more especially when on a Pacific station.

A vigia, it may be explained, is a reported reef or shoal, the existence of which or its exact locality is doubtful. It is well known to navigators that in no part of the world are there so many dangerous coral reefs and low islets rising abruptly from great depths, as in the Pacific ocean, and it is from here that most reports of vigias emanate. Very frequently the captain reporting is master of a whaler, and it is a common saying among whaling captains "that they do not care where their ship is, so long as there are plenty of whales in sight." The exact latitude and longitude, therefore, can rarely be given; but, nevertheless, the nearest cruiser must at once proceed to the locality indicated.

Arrived there she steams slowly up and down, up and down, across and around, for days, and sometimes weeks on end, until her commander either succeeds in finding the shoal or reef in question, or satisfies himself of its non-existence. In the latter case the crew's comments upon the whaler or other vessel sending in the false report, are entirely and utterly unfit for publication. And yet, after all, it might not have been her master's fault, for the appearance of a vigia sometimes caused by the reflection from a stationary cloud, by volcanic disturbance in the ocean's bed, by mirages, or even by shoals of fish, or by marine animalcules, often resembles reefs and breakers so closely as to deceive the most experienced.

SEAWEED LOOKED LIKE A VIGIA.

For instance, on one occasion, even so excellent a judge as Captain Maclear, of H.M. surveying-vessel *Alert*, was taken in. The sea was quite smooth, the weather delightful, when suddenly what was taken to be a red coral reef, some three fathoms below water, was described from the mast-head. The ship was instantly stopped and a boat launched, when it was found that the appearance was due to enormous masses of dark crimson seaweed, floating just beneath the surface.

On another occasion the ship was again stopped by the report "breakers ahead," and, on investigation, the disturbance was found to be caused by a huge shoal of big fish, which were jumping and spouting about at a place where several ocean currents met. Had these appearances been observed by a whaler, or a trading ship having no particular interest in the matter, two more vigias would have probably been added to the chart of the Pacific, and perhaps a couple of men-of-war dispatched on two wild-goose expeditions.

Here is another instance, reported by Navigating-Lieutenant W. H. Petley. He was, at the time, cruising in search of another reported vigia (which, by-the-by, he afterwards successfully located), when he came upon dense fields of sea saw-dust or conserve. Twice the ship was suddenly hove-to in broad daylight in consequence of the appearance presented of a reef awash, but no bottom could be obtained at three hundred fathoms.

DISCOLOURED WATER—AND NO REASON FOR IT.

What would appear to be a genuine spectre-vigia was reported in 1893, by Mr. John G. Hitchfield, master and owner of the Hawaiian schooner *Zilian*. On October 25th, while engaged in an ineffectual attempt to find the shoal charted in lat. 10° N., long. 179½° W., he saw what he felt confident were breakers of considerable height—the surrounding sea being comparatively smooth.

For two full hours he steered straight for them, watching them the whole time from the masthead through his glasses. They seemed to get gradually plainer, and then suddenly vanished. "The only way," he remarks, "I can account for this illusion is by double reflection (probably of the very shoal I was looking for); from the shoal to the clouds and back to the sea at the angle of incidence. The breakers were so perfect there was no mistaking them for a large shoal of fish."

Occasionally vigias are reported, the supposed existence of which cannot be explained upon any theory whatever. Thus, in July 1883, when H.M.S. *Egeria* was searching for the Pelorus reef, a streak of discoloured water was reported from aloft. The ship's course was directed towards it, and, after going two miles, it became visible from the poop deck. It had remained perfectly steady, and had every appearance of being a small shoal.

The ship was taken to within one hundred yards of the discoloured patch, and the dinghy lowered to get a sounding on it; no bottom, however, could be reached, so the ship was put in the middle of the patch, and a

sounding of 160 fathoms, no bottom, obtained. A bucket of water was drawn and a bottle of it preserved, but nothing whatever was found in it to account for the discolouration.

At the Fiji Islands, on two days in November, between 3 a.m. and sunrise, the sea worm, called by the natives "Balolo," appears upon the coral reefs in incredible numbers. The Fijians esteem it a great delicacy, and on its advent, which is sudden, they muster in force to collect it. They one and all assert, however, that it is impossible to predict the probable time of its appearance, and this is borne out by the Europeans longest resident in the group. From the masses of "Balolo" a thick white scum is given off, which floats away to sea in vast fields, and these are frequently mistaken for reefs even by local traders of experience.

In 1894, H.M. surveying-vessel, *Penguin*, searching for a reef reported by the captain of a trading ship, found herself heading straight for a tide rip, having all the appearance of being caused by a shoal awash. In great alarm the vessel was hove-to, and the boats got out, but, on sounding, a depth of 1713 fathoms was obtained. This peculiar appearance continued all the time the vessel was in the neighbourhood, and is quite unaccountable for by any known rules of navigation.

A VIGIA THAT DISAPPEARED.

A similar surface disturbance has also been reported by Commander Nicolls, of H.M.S. *Cormorant*, as having been seen by him on a passage from Malden Island to Penrhyn Island. "It presented," he says, "the appearance of waves breaking over rocks just under water." Captain Nicolls hazards the opinion that it might have been caused by a shoal of bonitos.

There can be no doubt that occasionally, not only reefs, but islands, that have once undoubtedly existed, have sunk silently and bodily into the depths of the ocean. Thus, for instance, the Britomart reef, lying to westward of Assumption, an island of the Mariana group, was carefully located and measured by the British barque *Britomart*, in 1869. It was found to be awash, and nearly a cable in length. Yet in 1881, the U.S.S. *Alert* found it gone, and no bottom at 300 fathoms.

Lindsay Island, again, was discovered by the schooner *Amelia* in 1848. Its exact position was given (lat. 19° 20' N., long. 141° 15' E.), and it was described as four miles long and forty feet high. Other vessels afterwards sighted it, and then vague rumours were circulated that it had disappeared. These proved to be correct, for in 1881, the *Alert* sailed over the precise spot where it had formerly been, and found not only no signs of the island, but no shoal, and no discoloured water.

MYSTERY OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS.

Very weird is the history of the Los Jardines, or Marshall Islands. They were discovered by one Alvaro de Saavedra, in 1529, and by him charted and explored. On his return a year or two later, however, they were nowhere to be seen, and the bluff old Spanish navigator roundly swore that they had been maliciously spirited away by the Prince of Darkness. In 1788, however, Captain Marshall, of the ship *Scarborough*, stumbled across two islands, which, from the description left by Alvaro de Saavedra, as well as by their relative position one to the other, were undoubtedly those seen by that navigator. Careful observations were made, and their precise locality ascertained and recorded; yet when they were afterwards sought for they had again vanished. Since then nothing has been heard of them beyond the most vague rumours; and, although still marked on British charts, there has been inserted below the names in brackets, "existence doubtful."

These two words, by the way, appear tacked on to the names of not a few islands, reefs, and shoals shown on the official Admiralty charts; but it must not too hastily be inferred from this that their existence is really mythical. Indeed, there are plenty of instances of islands and reefs being actually removed altogether from the charts, whose existence has afterwards been proved in the most conclusive manner, viz., by vessels being wrecked on them.

DISCOVERED BY A WRECK.

One notorious instance is afforded by the history of the Kingman reef. This had been shown (although under another name), for many years, but in 1870, after an exhaustive, but unsuccessful search, it was erased. Four years later the British steamship *Tartar* struck upon it, and became a total wreck, and, in consequence, it was properly surveyed. It was found that, so far from being mythical, it constituted one of the most dangerous reefs in the Pacific, being nearly ten miles long by five broad, and dry at low water on its north-eastern, eastern, and south-eastern edges.

Nimrod Islands, again, first seen by Captain Eilbeck, of the ship *Nimrod*, in 1828, in her passage from Port Jackson round Cape Horn, have been regarded as mythical for the better part of a century. Captain Biscoe sought ineffectually for them in 1881, and since then quite a dozen expeditions have tried vainly to locate them. Yet only last year an American whaler, named the *Elk*, almost ran herself ashore on the northernmost of them, and found them to be not more than forty miles to the eastward of the position originally assigned to them by Captain Eilbeck.

DECORATORS' DODGES.

Ways in which the Public are Induced to Make Great Shows of Bunting.

A BRIEF account of the ways and means of that class known as public decorators, or decorators of streets and buildings at times of festivity or celebration, may be read with interest by those who have on various occasions wondered how the effects were so quickly and so smoothly brought about. These lines are written by one who, until recently, held the post of traveller and clerk to a large firm of decorators, a firm employing forty men, and twice that number of women and girls, whose task was the making and mending of flags, banners, streamers, and devices.

In the office of this firm nearly all the daily and weekly newspapers were regularly scanned for news respecting forthcoming balls and parties, comings of age, bazaars, garden fêtes, and flower shows. By this means the first intimation of the prospect of a job was conveyed to the decorators. After cutting out the paragraph and making notes, a representative would be called and instructed to pay a visit to—let us say, for example—the vicar of a parish some fifty miles distant, who, it was reported, was about to hold a bazaar with which to raise funds for the paying off of the debt upon his new organ, or mission hall, as the case might be.

The representative would be told that he must go to the Vicarage as soon as possible, and lose no time in laying before the reverend gentleman a large portfolio containing a number of drawings showing public halls and such places transformed into Swiss villages, Old English streets, and a score or so of other scenes familiar to all those good-natured persons who have at different times been cajoled into entering these money-bewitching centres.

The vicar, in due course, is called upon by the well set-up young man, who is acting as representative for the public decorator, and the portfolio is produced, prices are talked of, and perhaps the vicar is persuaded into giving the names and addresses of those members of his church who are helping in the bazaar scheme. These individuals are afterwards separately visited and informed that the vicar awaits their sanction to the placing of an order, or else they are "nobbled" in view of a committee meeting.

Many bazaars have owed much of their success to the prettiness and taste with which a stall or other place has been adorned, for, however winning the stall holders, and however cheap the articles for sale, the mass of people who frequent such functions will not easily be tempted there unless report has it that there is some novelty in the shape of surprising change of scenery or absolutely new effects. Then, if a foreign scene is introduced, the ladies who preside are given much greater opportunities or scope in the way of dress.

When a firm of public decorators secures the order from the vicar, or the vicar's churchwardens, the debt is booked, and the manager of the hall in which the scenery is to be arranged is written to and asked to engage a couple or more local carpenters. The scenery is sent off a few days before the bazaar is to be held, and one or two expert men from the decorator's staff are sent along with it to superintend its erection.

Some caretakers of town-halls and public buildings make quite a little private income by covertly advising public decorators of bazaars and fêtes that are to be held, but that have, for some good reason or other, not been given a free advertisement by the newspapers. Early information is everything in the decorator's business, just as it is on the Stock Exchange, for competition has, of late years, increased very considerably. So that if one firm by reason of a quiet hint is enabled to secure a £40 or £60 order, the sovereign or two given to the hall-keeper is an excellent investment.

In the case of a Royal visit the task of the public decorator is of a much more formal nature. A member of the firm, or their most experienced representative, writes to the Lord Mayor, or the mayor, as the case may be, and asks for an appointment. It is customary on such occasions for the head of the corporation to call a special committee together, and this body clearly state their needs and invite tenders from the chief firms anxious to obtain the work. Many thousands of flags and banners, and many tons of timber, are pressed into use on such occasions, and the decoration of one street alone sometimes costs some hundreds of pounds, as in the case of St. James' Street, S.W., when the Prince of Wales was married.

This amount of money may seem at first sight to be very excessive, but it must be recollected that it may be necessary to employ at least a hundred men, besides horses and carts, and that much of the more costly material requisitioned is of no further use after a shower of rain, or several hours' exposure in the hot sun.

The arrangements for private weddings are often placed in the hands of the local tradespeople, but even then a share of the profit falls into the hands of the public decorators, for a small draper in a provincial town seldom has in stock all the bunting and fairy lamps that are required, and in such circumstances the decorator comes to the rescue, either by letting out on hire to the draper, or by privately sharing the work.

The story of the year is "Through Traitor's Gate," a tale of London's Towers, by Henry T. Johnson, just starting in THE BIG BUDGET.

HE TALKED TOO MUCH.

The Landlord has Altered his Ways now.

THE man was watering the front lawn with a hose. He was in his shirt sleeves, and smoked a cigar. He looked comfortable. A cadaverous, middle-aged man came along, leant against the iron fence, and mopped his forehead.

"Giving it a drink, eh?" said he to the man with the hose.

"Yes," said the latter, good-naturedly. "Wetting her down a bit."

"Neat little bit of lawn, that," said the man outside the fence.

"Uh-huh," said the man with the hose. "Jollied the landlord into returning it this spring. Then, after that, I wheedled him—or my wife did, for I never met him—into scattering clover seed all over it, so that I've got it into pretty good shape now."

"Must have an easy landlord," commented the man leaning on the iron fence.

"Easy!" said the man with the hose, shifting his cigar to the other side of his mouth. "I should rather think he is. Only way I can account for the easiness of that man is that he's not quite all there, or that he's so rich that he doesn't know how to spend his money."

"Go away!" said the man outside.

"That's quite right," said the man in his shirt sleeves. "I've only been living in that house about six months, and he's spent at least a hundred pounds on it; and the best of it is I only pay £10 a quarter for the house, whereas the folks all up and down the street, living in exactly the same kind of houses, have to pay £20."

"My goodness!" said the man outside the fence.

"I first moved in here," said the man with the hose, "let's see, yes, it was December 3rd. Knew I had a bargain in the house just as it was then, but I believe in getting all I can in this life, and so I sent my wife down to the landlord's office to make some demands for repairs. First she asked for a new kitchen range, to which he agreed at once, and it arrived a few days later. Then, that having been so easy, I thought we might as well have something else. Our bath tub was all right, but I'd seen some better ones in a shop window, and I thought that I might as well have my wife ask for one of the best in the market. Got it without any trouble, too."

"Must be a fine landlord, that," said the man leaning against the iron fence.

"Yes, or quite out of his mind," said the fortunate tenant. "Then—"

"John!" came a feminine voice from the second-storey window.

"Wait a minute, I'm busy," said the shirt-sleeved man, in reply to the feminine voice.

"Then, seeing that the old chap was of the sort that just loves to hurl his money at the little birdies, I sent the wife down one day to sound him on the subject of a complete re-painting inside. Would you believe it? In less than four days after she tackled him, the painters were at work, and they must have used forty different kinds of tints that my wife picked out. Ever hear the like of that?"

"I certainly never did," said the man outside.

"John," came the voice from above, "do come up here just for a second."

"Be up shortly," replied the man on the lawn.

"Don't know what I'll ask the old chap for next," he went on, addressing the man outside, "but I've a good mind to ask him for £50 so that I can take the family away for a holiday." And the man with the hose laughed uproariously.

"Good!" said the man outside. "Well, it's about time I went," and he walked off slowly down the street.

The man with the hose was still chuckling when his wife appeared at the front door.

"Such a bright, entertaining person you are, to be sure," she said to her husband.

"Huh?" he inquired.

"I say, I've such a brilliant individual for a husband," said his wife.

"What ever are you talking about?" he demanded.

"Oh, nothing," she answered cheerfully, "except that the old gentleman you've been telling your business to for the past half-hour—that's why I was calling you—is our landlord, and if you don't get notice of an increase in rent inside of twenty-four hours, I shall be very much surprised."

It sometimes happens that when a man fails in doing anything else well, he marries well.

"Doctor, I'm troubled with a severe pain. When I bend forward, stretch out my arms, and make a semi-circular movement with them, I feel a sharp pain in my left shoulder."

"But," said the physician somewhat testily, "why in the name of common sense do you make such absurd motions?"

"Well, if you can tell me any other way of getting into an overcoat, I wish you'd let me know!"

FORBIDDEN NEGATIVES.

The Routine of Taking Royal Photographs.

THE routine of taking Royal photographs is something like this: The photographer, in the first place, must be a man of established reputation, and as probably several are writing at once each gets a sitting in turn. The reply makes a regular appointment, say at Marlborough House, Sandringham, or Windsor, and on the day appointed the artist attends with his apparatus, and one or two assistants.

After a few minutes' wait in an outer room he is conducted into the presence of the Royal personage, whose personal attendants have seen to it that everything is in readiness for the taking of the photograph in the room.

Most Royal personages, particularly our King, are experienced sitters, thanks to the enormous number of times they have been photographed, and the actual operation is very quickly over. Next comes the developing of the negative, the "retouching"; and when at last the proof is ready it is taken to the Palace by the photographer for Royal sanction.

You would be amazed if you knew the number of condemned negatives, for the slightest suspicion of lack of dignity or frivolous appearance is enough to condemn the negative to the shelves of the studio for ever. Very rarely indeed is one of our Royal Family photographed smiling, much less laughing, though the well known portrait of her late Majesty Queen Victoria was a very conspicuous exception to this rule. That, however, was an anapshot taken by an amateur.

Some years ago a photograph was taken of Princess Maud of Wales, who, just as the exposure was being made, laughed heartily at some remark her sister had made, and the resulting picture was instantly condemned by our present Queen.

Of course, with Royal children, the case is quite different, and the more innocent fun there is in the photograph the better. For example, there is the well-known set taken by the biograph people showing the children of the Prince and Princess of Wales at play in the gardens of Marlborough House. In this set, little Prince Eddy and others are seen riding rocking-horses and drilling as soldiers.

Of course there are special photographs occasionally taken by professionals which are not for public sale or circulation at all, but exclusively for private use and distribution in Royal circles, but such a commission as this is only intrusted to the most discreet of all Royal photographers.

CEREBOS

TABLE

SALT.

"Shortly put, the difference between ordinary salt and the 'Cerebos' preparation is this, the one is a seasoning, the other a **SPLENDID FOOD**, containing the most nutritive qualities, absolutely essential to the physical framework."

From the "Bristol Mercury," reporting the British Medical Congress.

Be sure you get "Cerebos" salt, and not an inferior substitute.



ISOBEL will be glad to answer questions of general interest upon household matters so far as space permits. A pretty pencil-case will be given to

each reader whose inquiry is dealt with on this page. Envelopes should be marked HOME NOTES PAGE.

To Clean Galvanised Utensils. there is better than paraffin. Take a piece of rag, dip into the paraffin, rub the whole surface thoroughly. Rinse thoroughly in hot soapy water and then in plain hot water. (Reply to Mrs. A. J.)

Cocoa-nut Pyramids. Beat the whites of two eggs till light and stiff; mix with two cupfuls of grated cocoanut, a cupful of caster sugar, and two tablespoonfuls of flour. When all is made into a stiff paste, roll into pyramids and bake a nice brown. (Thanks to DENNY.)

Window Cleaning. Often the outside of a window is dusty and splashed, needing cleaning; to do this easily proceed as follows: Take half a newspaper, rub it soft in your hands, wet a corner of it, go out and rub off the dirt with that wet corner, wipe it with the dry part, come in, burn the paper, and the window is cleaned without leaving dirty cloths about.

This Excellent Lemon Curd recipe is probably the one you need: Boil the rind of one lemon until tender, (changing the water once), pound it thoroughly, add a quarter of a pound of butter, the same of caster sugar, and two well beaten eggs. Set the mixture in a gallipot, stand it in a sauce-pan of boiling water, and stir till the mixture thickens, taking care that it does not boil. (Reply to CHEF.)

Rhubarb Jam. This recipe is for the spring rhubarb only. Wipe the fruit and cut it in pieces as for tarts. To each pound of fruit add three-quarters of a pound of loaf sugar, and the peel of half a lemon cut very finely, and if liked, four or five bitter almonds. Set these ingredients together in a basin all night to draw the juice, then set in a preserving-pan, and boil fast for an hour. Try it by putting a little on a plate, and if it sets it is done. Fill the pots while the jam is hot, and cover with white paper brushed over with white of egg. (Reply to Mr. JURY.)

Stains on Carpets. Use ammonia with equal quantity of hot water, this will also revive the colour. Afterwards dry with plenty of clean cloths. For oil stains on a Persian carpet the best thing is a preparation of quillar which is to be had from the chemist. This must be rubbed lightly all over the stain and sponged out with clean warm water, after it has been allowed to stay on a short time, taking care not to soak the carpet in the operation. A good carpet soap is also useful for removing stains on carpet. (Reply to M. B. C.)

Marmalade Pudding. Beat up four ounces of butter to a cream and add to it four ounces of sugar, then add one or two tablespoonfuls of marmalade, finely chopped, two eggs, a tablespoonful of brandy, and six ounces of finely sifted flour, in which is mixed some baking-powder. Keep on beating the mixture while adding each ingredient. When all is thoroughly mixed, pour into a buttered mould and steam for three hours. Serve with a sauce made of two tablespoonfuls of marmalade and three of brandy. N.B.—If suet is used instead of butter, add two ounces of fine white breadcrumbs to the flour. (Reply to LEWIS.)

Are You Going to Take your children to the seaside for their summer holidays? If you do, of course the little ones will want to bathe. Now, with HOME



NOTES this week will be given away the paper pattern of a very comfortable and useful little bathing costume, which may be worn by either boy or girl (age 6 to 8). It is quite a simple and easy garment to make, and you will find full directions in this week's issue. The small sketch in the margin shows you exactly how it will look when finished. You should obtain a copy at once—it will only cost a penny—and set to work, for the summer will be here almost before one can look round.

Leather Satchels may be cleaned with a sponge dipped in warm water in which a little oxalic acid has been dissolved.

Eggs with Cheese. Boil some eggs for ten minutes, and plunge in cold water. Make a little good white sauce. Season it with cayenne pepper, salt, and a dash of lemon; heat the eggs in this, cut in halves. Just before serving, flavour the sauce with grated cheese, pour on to a hot dish, garnish with croûtons of fried bread and serve.

To Remove Bloodstains from clothes is often difficult, but I have found that two or three of these applications are effectual even on a mattress after an operation. Make a paste of finely powdered starch and cold water, lay it on the stain and set in the sun, and when dry brush off. (Reply to BIRD.)

When Boiling Potatoes, cook till a fork easily, pour off the water, scatter a little salt over, take the pot to the door or window and shake it gently. This will make them mealy. Keep the potatoes in the air long enough to let the steam escape, then set the pan in a warm place, and cover with a napkin till wanted.

To Preserve and Soften Boots. This recipe is sent me by a reader who has used it and finds it softens the leather and keeps the feet both dry and warm, though it does not injure the stockings, for the oil quickly penetrates the leather. First wash the boots with lukewarm water and then dress with castor oil on the inside of the boots. (Thanks to BRADBURY.)

Royal Toma'o Sauce. Simmer over a slow fire six tomatoes, two turnips, two apples, one onion, one carrot, and some whole pepper for half an hour. Take out the pepper, work all through a hair sieve, add a tablespoonful of tarragon vinegar, the same quantity of chile vinegar, and if required to moisten, a little ordinary vinegar. Set in a stoppered bottle for use.

Beef Skirt Pudding. Procure one pound of beef skirting, half a pound of steak, and four to five ounces of beef kidney. Make a good suet paste, and with it line a greased basin. Cut the skirt into two-inch squares, also the steak, dip into seasoned flour, and arrange lightly in a basin, scatter very finely chopped parsley and onion over. Cover with cold water, cover the pudding with crust, then with a floured cloth, and cook steadily for four hours in a steamer.

Lemon Marmalade with Ginger. Take six lemons and slice them very thinly, only rejecting the seeds. To each pound of sliced fruit add three pints of cold water, and let all stand for twenty-four hours; then boil it till the chips are tender, adding to it a piece of crushed ginger tied in muslin. Taste the syrup from time to time, and when you think the flavour of ginger is sufficiently strong remove it. Pour the marmalade into an earthenware bowl, and allow it to remain till next day. Then weigh it, and to every pound of boiled fruit add one pound and a half of lump sugar; cook the whole till the syrup jellies and the chips are rather transparent. Pour into pots, and cover with white paper brushed over with white of egg. In taking out the pips, be very careful to waste none of the fruit, as it is all needed for the syrup. (Reply to MAY.)

The Icing of Cakes is not very easy to those who perform the process at long intervals, for it is difficult owing to difference in sugar, and size and quality of the eggs. The following will be a great help to those of small experience: Take the whites of two eggs, using only about one and a half to start with, and at the same time two or three heaped tablespoonfuls of the best icing sugar in an earthenware utensil. Beat all together for a few minutes with a wooden spoon; the proper consistency will be known by the fact that when the spoon is lifted from the sugar it will stand as the spoon leaves it and will not run level. Sugar must be added gradually till the icing gets to that state. Do not omit to use plenty of "elbow grease." Just the least touch of blue water will improve the appearance. Instead of using cornflour, as many advise, add a few drops of rosewater; it really answers the same purpose and is better. When the icing sugar has been properly beaten to the degree mentioned above, the half of the white of egg should be beaten in, and all will have a fine glossy appearance, and then add the rosewater, which preserves the colour of the icing and prevents any fatty matter from the cake staining. For icing the cake it is best not to wet the palette knife, but keep a clean edge, putting the cake on some stand that can be revolved easily. Always get your icing sugar from a high-class confectioner, and ask for bridal sugar. (Thanks to HARLEY STREET.)

Isobel

CAN WE LEARN TO LOVE?

By MADGE MORRIS.

"WHOEVER loved, that loved not at first sight" questioned the immortal bard, yet numbers of wedded folk—folk who married for love's sweet sake—will confess that, with them, the grand passion was no sudden flame that leapt to burning life, but a gradual growth, a line upon line, precept, learnt step by step in fear and trembling, as they traversed the highway of life.

To the girl whose dawning womanhood suggests love as that which should come as a swift, mystic cloud enveloping heart and life, the question: "Can we learn to love?" comes as a serious problem. And yet, if the weight of realism adds its forces to the illusions of sentiment, the problem is not such a very difficult one to solve after all.

In the first place, there is a reason for everything under the sun; a basis for every emotion, thought, or feeling of the human heart, and love is no exception to this inviolate rule. Of course, the poetic temperament would have us believe that love is the meeting of two souls, each destined from all time to complete the perfection of the other. But we must and can go farther—far enough to trace that love has a tangible basis, however unromantic the proving of it may appear.

Take, for instance, the case of any happily wedded pair, and question either as to the origin of their love for the other, and the reply would be: "Oh, I fell in love with John because he was so clever or so handsome," or, "I loved Mary because she was so womanly or so beautiful," each thus giving a concrete, tangible reason!

The vapid answer: "Oh, we just fell in love with each other," would not be volunteered in one instance in a hundred, simply because, though people undoubtedly do fall in love, that fall is seldom, if ever, a heedless, irresponsible tumble, but a trip up over some definite attraction or characteristic!

And surely, the idea of learning to love is far more feasible than that of sudden, mysterious affection. After all, love is the holiest epoch in a human life, and it is levelling that which should be revered to a passing low plane to expect its dawn will come as a whirlwind, needing less preparation than any of the other and minor epochs that mark as milestones the current of our lives.

With some, the learning period is of short duration, intuition making life's difficult lesson book an open page of easy study. While, with others, time wings its flight, maybe, into the vale of tears ere touch of wedded hands becomes the one thing to be desired. Yet, be the time long or short, the lesson of love is learnt unconsciously; its opening page is turned unknowingly and the study progresses day by day until the unwritten book is finished, and the existence of love is disclosed.

To a girl the knowledge that her heart has gone into another's keeping often brings with its advent pain. Pain lest the being loved cared not for her heart's highest gift; pain lest any deed or word should betray her secret, and so cast an aspersion on her maidenly modesty.

The discovery with a man is also, to a certain extent, fraught with fear; fear lest the idol that has crept into his heart should be unwilling to reign its queen. He only knows how exquisitely dear has become the clasping of her hand, the sound of her voice; he only realises now that his lesson is learnt all life would mean were its pages studied in vain!

As a rule, a man is quicker in facing realism than a woman. He does not dilly-dally with the inevitable, but accepts things as they are; thus there are no lengthy questions and heart-burnings for him, as to the state of her feelings, for he proposes and settles matters once and for all. A girl has, however, to wait, even after her lesson of love has attained completion, for hers is the lot of question and doubt, since the right to solve the problem for herself has been denied her.

Oh! yes, we can, and do learn to love. The girl who dons a pretty frock because a certain man may chance to call, or refuses an invitation out for the same reason; and the man who affects buttonholes, and strives to be seen at his best in the eyes of some particular maid, are each learning to love in their separate ways.

Each according to their individuality is acquiring a hold on another's affection.

But woe betide the man or maiden who, during this lesson time, develops peculiarities that attract the notice of the outside, unympathetic world. The girl who—

Can muse in a crowd all day,

On the absent face that fixed her,

may swiftly learn the great lesson, but her methods of study are wont to excite comment and ridicule.

So with the man who shuns the fellowship of his kind and affects the habits of a recluse, because he has turned a new page in life's history. He is sure to be made the subject of feminine gossip and masculine chaff, and though he may not have discovered that he is learning to love, it were wiser he should appear as natural and commonplace as possible, even though he feel at variance with the world at large and knows not why!

HOLIDAYS FOR 1902.	1902, MARCH.	APRIL.	MAY.	JUNE.	JULY.	AUGUST.
Good Friday . . . March 25.	M 3 9 16 23 30	M 6 13 20 27	M 4 11 18 25	M 1 8 15 22 29	M 6 13 20 27	M 4 11 18 25
Easter Monday . . . March 31.	M 3 10 17 24 31	M 7 14 21 28	M 5 12 19 26	M 2 9 16 23 30	M 7 14 21 28	M 5 12 19 26
Whitson Monday . . . May 19.	T 4 11 18 25	T 1 8 15 22 29	T 6 13 20 27	T 3 10 17 24	T 1 8 15 22 29	T 6 13 20 27
Coronation Day . . . June 26.	W 5 12 19 26	W 2 9 16 23 30	W 7 14 21 28	W 4 11 18 25	W 2 9 16 23 30	W 6 13 20 27
Bank Holiday . . . August 4.	T 6 13 20 27	T 3 10 17 24	T 8 15 22 29	T 5 12 19 26	T 3 10 17 24 31	T 7 14 21 28
Christmas Day . . . December 25.	F 7 14 21 28	F 4 11 18 25	F 9 16 23 30	F 6 13 20 27	F 4 11 18 25	F 8 15 22 29
Boxing Day . . . December 26.	S 1 8 15 22 29	S 5 12 19 26	S 10 17 24 31	S 7 14 21 28	S 5 12 19 26	S 9 16 23 30

"Low and Weak"

"Now, I am happy to say, he is perfectly well and strong"



HARRY LEWIS
(From a photograph.)

How many parents this morning are facing the question of finding something to build up their child's constitution? They have but to master the meaning of this letter:

"Barton Villa, Breinton Road,
Hereford, January 14th, 1901.

"Dear Sirs,—My little boy, three years of age, had measles, followed by whooping-cough, which left him very low and weak, and it was very necessary that we should have something to build up his constitution. Reading of the good results so many were deriving from Scott's Emulsion, I resolved to try the preparation, and see if it would have the desired effect upon my son. I was very delighted to find a decided improvement in his condition before the contents of the first bottle was exhausted. The cough was very much better—he was more lively and better in every way. The treatment was continued, with the result that his appetite greatly improved; he lost the cough, and has been free from colds since taking Scott's Emulsion, whereas before he was always taking cold. Now, at the end of the treatment, I am happy to say he is well and strong; in fact, a better health and spirits than he was before, which I consider is due to the timely use of Scott's Emulsion. He is so fond of the Emulsion that he would get the bottle himself, so there was never any trouble in administering it.

I remain, yours truly,

"(Signed) AUSTIN LEWIS."

Mr. Lewis evidently reasoned a little in reading our advertisements—reasoned in his boy's interest. Therefore Mr. Lewis resolved to try Scott's Emulsion for his son, so that his boy

might share the good results others were obtaining. Mr. Lewis's letter shows that he obtained these results in abundance. And mind you, Mr. Lewis owes the restoration to health of his boy, not to substitutes for, nor imitations of, Scott's Emulsion, but to "the timely use of Scott's Emulsion."

That is all any heart-sore mother needs to know: "the timely use of Scott's Emulsion." If that English nursery motto be acted on—"the timely use of Scott's Emulsion"—the trouble is at once in hand, the child is won back to health, the constitution is built up. If we wrote the whole of this paper many times over we could not give you a more valuable sentence for your homes: "the timely use of Scott's Emulsion; that is the whole story of the cure of every childish trouble.

"We know that, in the interest of your baby, you would not think of giving it something that promises only doubtful results. For other reasons do not attempt to give plain cod-liver oil. An eminent physician, who made the tests, says: "Scott's Emulsion is three times as efficacious as a similar amount of cod-liver oil." Everything you see urges you to the same thing: "the timely use of Scott's Emulsion."

Scott's Emulsion has as a trade mark, a man carrying a big fish; that picture on the wrapper of the bottle is your guarantee in "the timely use of Scott's Emulsion."

You can obtain a sample of Scott's Emulsion by sending threepence to cover postage to Scott & Bowne Ltd., 95 Great Saffron Hill, London, E.C., and mentioning this paper. All chemists sell Scott's Emulsion.

A Peep into the Stomach.

When the mucous membrane lining of the Stomach is examined under a microscope, it is seen to be covered with tiny pores. These small openings are the mouths of minute tubes termed *Gastric Glands*, which secrete a peculiar fluid known to physiologists as *Gastric Juice*. This Gastric Juice has the special power of dissolving albuminous or proteid matter of the Food, and transforming it into *peptones*. These subsequently reach the Blood, by which they are carried to all parts of the System. In this way is the Body nourished.

Now when the Stomach is disordered, the flow of Gastric Juice is much reduced, and the fluid is of inferior quality. Consequently the Food is not properly digested, and remains to obstruct the Alimentary Canal, giving rise to Flatulence, Heartburn, Nausea, Constipation, and numerous other ailments. In such cases it is plain that what is required is something that will improve the quality of the Gastric Juice and gently stimulate the glands to increase the quantity. It is for just these purposes that Guy's Tonic was designed, and it is because Guy's Tonic works in this common-sense way that it has proved so eminently successful in thousands of cases where indigestion was the bane of the sufferer's existence.

Guy's Tonic contains qualities similar to the Gastric Juice, and is thus able to actually assist in the process of Digestion. Besides which, Guy's Tonic gently stimulates the mucous membrane of the Stomach and the mucous glands of the Intestinal Canal; hence we have an increased secretion of the Gastric and Intestinal Juices. This results in the digestion of a much larger quantity of Food, so that far more nourishment becomes available to build up the general Health. Pain and Discomfort after Eating, weight at the pit of the Stomach, Distention, and other distressing symptoms are also prevented. After a short course of Guy's Tonic, the Stomach is so strengthened as to be able to carry on its processes without assistance. For all forms of Indigestion and Stomach Weakness, Guy's Tonic has proved to be a specific cure, and it is confidently recommended to you as the nearest approach to a perfect Tonic-Digestive Medicine yet attained. Give it a trial to-day—you will have reason to feel glad at having acted on this advice.

Obstinate Indigestion Cured by Guy's Tonic.

Miss M. E. Lilley, of 4 Terminus Buildings, Seaford, Sussex, writes:—

"Just a few lines in grateful acknowledgment of the beneficial effects I have experienced from taking Guy's Tonic. About eight years ago I had a severe attack of Gastritis, and was ill for some considerable time. For the next six or seven years I suffered from Chronic Indigestion, and was unable to enjoy my Food. I had to exercise extreme caution in the selection of that Food of which I did partake—certain Food, such as pork, had to be left severely alone. I am thankful to say that, after taking a course of Guy's Tonic, I am able to sit down to my meals with no loathing feeling and partake of the dishes (formerly debarred) with an enjoyable relish, and unattended by any unpleasant symptoms afterwards."

"I Feel Ten Years Younger."

Mr. Edwin Palmer, of the Princess Theatre, Melbourne, now residing at 36 Eastlake Road, Camberwell, London, S.E., writes:—

"The following facts may interest you, and many sufferers may derive great benefit by reading the same.

"During the last fourteen or fifteen years I have suffered from repeated attacks of Dyspepsia and Torpid Liver, causing sleepless nights, Loss of Appetite, etc.; being unable to take proper Nourishment I have at times had no Energy requisite for my profession. On one occasion I had to throw up a long engagement to remain in town for treatment. I have paid many pounds to medical men, and for patent medicines—without obtaining relief. Three weeks ago I was advised to try Guy's Tonic. I did—with a small bottle—found myself improved—have since taken two large bottles: result, a fair Appetite, and I feel ten years younger. I have now such faith in Guy's Tonic that I shall continue to take it until I am completely cured, which I have no doubt a few more bottles will effect."

Guy's Tonic is sold by Chemists and Stores Everywhere at 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. per bottle.

A full shilling bottle of Choice Perfume will be given in exchange for 18 Erasmic Soap wrappers.



Ask your Chemist for

"A fourpenny tablet of

Erasmic soap"

Erasmic Soap is a delightfully perfumed Toilet Soap, soothing, healing and beautifying the complexion. The perfume is delicate and fragrant, and lasts until the soap is worn to a wafer.

DON'T FORGET TO SAVE THE WRAPPERS.

THE ERASMIC CO., LTD., 47, OXFORD STREET, W.

A pencil-case will be awarded to each person whose letter is dealt with on this page, or whose suggestion for a title is used.

R. O. A.—Thanks for your very interesting comments on my recent remarks on laughing at puns. As you say, it is often that the things which appeal most strongly to our sense of humour excite us least to laughter, and that on reading the most humorous authors, we often maintain a straight face though all the while intensely amused. I can only suggest the following explanation of this phenomenon: When a humorous story is told us in a room full of people, we are more conscious of the material side of the humour. When a man tells you in his own peculiar tone of voice of an absurd incident, he invests it with a life and vividness which the cleverest author must fail to achieve, and one is compelled to laugh. On reading the same story in print, unless our imagination is very active, we do not "see" the circumstances, but are merely conscious of their existence. At the same time, I think those of the greatest sense of humour can enjoy it in any form, whether spoken or written, and the certain test of a humorous author is whether he can be as funny in print as in speech. With Mark Twain, whom you cite, this is undoubtedly the case. I cannot imagine a Mark Twain story being improved by speech.

THE list which you will find below is scarcely characteristic, so far as the size is concerned, of the generosity of P. W. readers. We don't want to confess that we are going to have a bad start this year—Coronation Year. It is a year in which everybody ought to do something special to celebrate it, and, between ourselves, I would suggest that one of the things to make yourself responsible for is a modest subscription to the **FRESH AIR FUND**. Remember that, although hundreds of thousands of people will have a

All amounts should be made payable to The Secretary, F.R.E.S. AIR FUND, Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., from whom subscription lists may be had post free.

Printed by HORACE COX, Broom's Buildings, E.C. and Published by A. ARTHUR
PEARSON LTD., at Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, London W.C.

**If I get without trouble
My "P.W."**



Carry **MONKEY BRAND**

For Paintwork.

For Steel and Iron.

For Copper and Brass.

For Tinware.

For Earthenware.

**BROOKE'S
MONKEY BRAND
SOAP**

Should be your constant companion
in all your work.

**THE WORLD'S POLISHER & LABOUR SAVER.
WON'T WASH CLOTHES.**

LEVER BROTHERS LIMITED, PORT SUNLIGHT, CHESHIRE.

Carry **MONKEY BRAND**

For Bicycles and Tricycles.

For Kitchen Tables and Floors.

For Linoleum and Oilcloths.

For Harness and Stable Fittings.

For a Thousand Household Uses.

Anæmic Girl! You Can be Cured, Now:

but Anæmia neglected turns to
Consumption.



If you are easily tired, always out of breath when you go upstairs, have cold fingers and feet; if your lips are pale and your eyes dull, **BE WARNED:** Purgatives (opening medicines) will make you worse and weaker, and more liable to drift into Consumption: they cannot cure you. You need what will put new blood into your system. As they have already cured thousands of girls, so Dr. Williams' Pink Pills will cure you. Ask your friends whether they have not met Girls who were Dying in a Decline, and have been saved by

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People

That is all you need in order to be convinced that they will cure you. We are perfectly easy about that. Is there any other medicine whose proprietors can fearlessly rest their claim upon the Universal Knowledge of the Public.

A reporter of the WEEKLY DISPATCH recently had an interesting chat with Miss Edith Moore, a young lady living with her parents at No. 1 Park Cottages, Exeter Road, Croydon.

"I would never advise any girl," said Miss Moore, "to become a canvasser. I only had a short experience, but I found it very trying indeed, and it led to my being very seriously ill; and if it had not been for the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People I might never have recovered. I think it was the exposure and the long hours that led to my going into a decline a little more than twelve months ago. I first began to find that food was distasteful, and when I did eat I had very severe pains in my back and neck. At last food was quite repulsive. Then I began to have terrible headaches, which lasted for days. I began to grow thin and I was very pale. My lips and gums were bloodless and white. I had great palpitation of the heart and I felt terribly depressed; in fact, I did not want to live. All day long I was drowsy, lifeless, and without sufficient strength to even stand or walk."

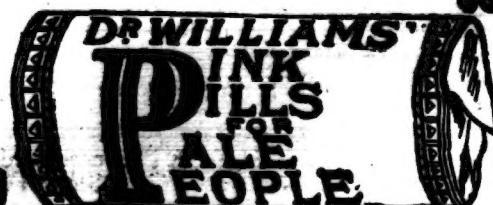
Mrs. Moore, the mother of the young lady, who was present at the interview, added: "Of course we had a doctor, but no medicine seemed to do her any good. One day I heard of a young woman whose life had been saved by Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People and so I determined to see what effect they would have in my daughter's case. I could not believe my own eyes, for before the first box was half used she began to get better. When the first box was finished she had more blood in her lips and she was not so depressed and drowsy. At the end of the second box she commenced to eat her meals and the indigestion disappeared. The third box entirely cured the perpetual headache. She could walk about, and week by week she continued to improve. The colour came to her face and lips, then she began to put on flesh and move about, until at last she was able to accept an appointment as cashier. She walks to business and back and thinks nothing of three or four miles. Would you think, to look at her now, that before she took a few boxes of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People she was more like a ghost than a human being?" It seemed difficult to realise that the handsome young woman with a pretty colour, red lips, and her head covered with a profusion of wavy hair was the "corpse" of a few months ago. Miss Moore moved about with such grace and recited some of her experiences with such verve that it was clear that she had recovered her health and spirits.



MISS EDITH MOORE.

(From a photograph.)

Anæmia attacks Men as well as Women. Beware of short breath, pale lips, indigestion, constipation, chilliness. All classes of people praise Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for the way in which they have cured Paralysis, Locomotor Ataxy, Rheumatism, and Sciatica; also all diseases arising from Impoverishment of the Blood, Scrofula, Rickets, Chronic Erysipelas, Consumption of the Bowels and Lungs, Anæmia, Pale and Sallow Complexion, General Muscular Weakness, Loss of Appetite, Palpitations, Pains in the Back, Nervous Headache and Neuralgia, Early Decay, all Forms of Female Weakness and Hysteria. These pills are a tonic not a purgative. They are genuine only with the full name, Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People, and are sold by Chemists, and by Dr. Williams' Medicine Company, Holborn Viaduct, London, at 2s. 9d. a box; six boxes for 13s. 9d.



Begins To-day.

OUT OF GREAT TRIBULATION.

By the author of "Fettered Lives" and "As a Man Sows."

FIRST INSTALMENT.

In the Silence of the Night.

The solitary note of the village clock striking the half-hour had died away, and the deathlike silence that pervaded the deserted road from Warham village to Mr. Mansfield's house was broken only by the faint whirr of a bicycle. Though the night was dark and starless, the cyclist rode with an unlighted lamp. Fifty yards from Mr. Mansfield's house he dismounted, and noiselessly crept to the dining-room windows.

Cool hand as Benny was, a quiver of excitement passed over him as a faint grating sound, coming from behind the windows, reached his ears. The next moment the shutters had been drawn back and the window was noiselessly opened by Seaton Revelle.

"Hist!"

"Right," breathed Benny, "I'm here," and more like a shadow than a man of flesh and blood, he glided through the open window into the pitch dark room beyond.

A minute later a yellow circle of light fell upon the massive safe that stood in one corner of the room.

Revelle had a bundle of keys in his hand; holding it in the light of the lantern, he selected one of a peculiar pattern.

"Thank goodness," he whispered, as he fitted it in the lock, "it's an ordinary, not a combination lock."

He turned the key and the great door swung back noiselessly on its well-oiled hinges.

But the next moment a stifled oath escaped his lips.

Someone was moving across the floor of the room overhead.

"Out with the light! Don't move, Benny," he breathed between his clenched teeth; "leave it to me."

Quick as thought he drew himself up close to the door.

The footsteps were moving towards the study. Revelle clenched his fist with the action of a man about to strike.

The next instant Alec Scarsdale, fully dressed, carrying a candle in one hand and shading his eyes with the other crossed the threshold.

He started back as his eyes fell upon the motionless figure of Benny, dimly lighted by the candle, standing beside the open safe.

Then, before he could cry out or raise the alarm, there was the sickening sound of a blow. With a dull thud he rolled over on the thick carpet, stunned and insensible.

Benny darted from the room.

"Help—thieves—help!" cried Revelle.

In an instant all was confusion within the house. Frightened men and women servants, some half-dressed, others carrying lights, rushed down the stairs into the hall.

As the cry rang out a second time, Esther Mansfield, her face white with terror, a light robe hurriedly thrown about her, descended the stairs. She followed the group of servants who, guided by the shouts, were crowding into the study.

The lights fell upon the open safe; upon Seaton Revelle, who knelt beside and gripped a prostrate figure.

"Robbery!" he cried. "There were two of them—it was dark—one's escaped—but I've got the other. Quick, someone go for the police!"

Snatching a light from one of the shivering servants, he brought it close to the face of the man stretched on the floor.

"My God!" he cried, dashing a hand across his eyes. "It can't be! Yes! It's—it's Alec Scarsdale!"

When Alec Scarsdale, opening his eyes, gazed wildly around him, he was lying on a couch in the study. His head was throbbing fiercely. For a few moments he was but dimly conscious of indistinct and unrecognisable figures hovering round him. It was only when the mist had cleared away from his eyes that the figures resolved themselves into Seaton Revelle, two constables, and John Mansfield, who, his face white with passion, his eyes heavily rimmed, was gazing sternly at him.

"What's happened?" gasped Scarsdale, clasping his burning, scarred forehead, "have—the scoundrels escaped? I should recognise one of them again, but the other struck me down before—before I could see him."

The two policemen, who had hurried up from the village police-station, exchanged significant glances. John Mansfield had turned from a white to a livid colour.

For a moment there was a deathlike silence, ominous as the unnatural calm before the outbreak of the storm. Then it was broken by the banker's voice, hoarse and almost inarticulate with rage.

"You! You, whom I have believed in, trusted,—you, who yesterday dared to tell me you loved my child—Ah, it's too much! I can't trust myself to speak!"

Scarsdale's eyes were staring wide. Did he hear aright, or had that blow affected his senses?

"What are you saying?" he breathed out hoarsely. "What do you mean?"

"Do you think," thundered John Mansfield, "that I would allow you to be arrested if there was a shadow of doubt,—you, who were caught in the act, the open safe before you, the very key in your hand! Constables, do your duty."

The two policemen sprang upon him. He did not resist; he was utterly stunned.

"I tell you," he cried, as the hot, passionate blood again surged to his forehead, pointing an accusing finger at Seaton Revelle, "that that man has perjured himself. Oh, God!"

—his voice broke and faltered—"am I alone? Does no one believe me innocent?"

"Yes—yes, I do! I—I believe you innocent!"

The words, piteous in their intensity, rang out with startling abruptness from the threshold. Every face was turned in the direction whence they had come. Scarsdale staggered back.

There, white as death, her great, dark eyes dilated with a look of wild grief, her whole frame quivering, stood Esther. Then, before her father could prevent her, she sprang forward and flung her arms round Scarsdale's neck.

"Alec, Alec," she sobbed, "I know it can't be true, I know it can't be true!"

It was a dramatic scene. The graceful, sobbing girl clinging to the stalwart, well-knit, handcuffed figure; the helmeted police; Seaton Revelle, a shadow on his handsome face; John Mansfield, quivering and grey with passion.

"Esther," whispered Scarsdale, no longer conscious of the presence of the others, "thank God for this! I must go. Who knows, the truth of this night's work may yet come to light. Your love, your belief, will give me strength to fight the future. God bless you, my darling. Good-bye!"

He kissed her gently on the forehead. With a piteous cry she staggered from him, and, sinking down on the couch where he had lain, buried her face in her arms. He cast a long look at her quivering form. A blurring mist had dimmed



Scarsdale had Esther tied the rope around her waist, then the grassy ledge crumbled beneath her feet. At that moment a knife deliberately cut in two the rope which held her rescuer.

his eyes; his lips were twitching convulsively. Then he steadied himself, and, turning to the constables, said: "I'm ready."

The "Crown and Cushion," the inn at which Benjamin Beard had made a brief stay, was an old-fashioned hostelry. The morning following Scarsdale's arrest saw tap-room, bar, and bar-parlour, crowded. There was only one topic of

conversation—the sensational robbery at "Woodlands," the name of John Mansfield's residence. The excitement was intense, and the consumption of liquor great. Most of the facts were known. A servant from "Woodlands" had visited the inn, and had been the centre of interest. Guilty was the almost unanimous verdict brought against Scarsdale by those gathered there. But what of the unknown accomplice? An arrest had already been made, but the individual proved a conclusive *alibi*, and had been released.

Conversation was in full swing round the bar, when a bicyclist rode up leisurely, and dismounted outside the inn.

He was a little man of homely aspect, with a kindly face, and a pair of small, cheery eyes. Though his hair was quite grey and he was well past the meridian of life, there was a certain youthfulness about his bearing. A casual observer, taking stock of him, would have probably attributed this youthfulness to a cheerful disposition, and the fact that he had led an uneventful, healthy life. A knapsack was slung on his back. Removing his cap to wipe his forehead the little man revealed a bald spot on his head, not unlike a priest's tonsure.

"A most enjoyable spin," he said to himself, "most. I think I am entitled to a half-pint of shandy-gaff!"

Excited, loud voices reached him from the inn.

"There seems to be a very animated discussion going on," he said to himself as he entered, and worked his way through the crowd to the bar.

"Good morning to you!" he said amiably to the landlord, and ordered his shandy-gaff.

John Goodman, the landlord, was at that moment thinking of the unknown, mysterious accomplice so badly wanted by the police. He eyed the little man rather suspiciously. He was an utter stranger to him, and strangers, under existing circumstances, were liable to be looked upon with suspicion.

"Come far, sir?" said Goodman, eyeing the knapsack now, and thinking of bank notes and diamonds.

"No," answered the little man, "dome about twenty miles, not more; but it has been glorious riding. Lovely country!"

The crime of the previous night was being discussed on every side. The little man's homely face began to assume a look of mild interest.

"A burglary in this neighbourhood?" he said to the landlord.

"Do you mean to say you've not heard of the robbery up at the 'Woodlands,' and the arrest of Mr. Scarsdale?"

"No, indeed!"

The landlord, eyeing him suspiciously, gave a brief account of the crime.

The little man's look of interest deepened.

"H'm!" he ejaculated, half to himself, "H'm!"—then addressing the landlord—"Yes, from what you've told me the evidence certainly does seem dead against Scarsdale; but I must say that I don't see his motive. He was, you tell me, supposed to be engaged to Miss Mansfield. He was in a good and confidential position. You would have thought, too, if he had wanted money—presuming that he did—that being in a bank and in a confidential position, he would have adopted a less crude and less risky method than burglary. In any case, it is very painful, very sad. Poor girl!"

The little man was thinking now of Miss Mansfield.

"Yes," said the landlord, "it's sad; but it's as clear as a pike-staff!"

The knapsack on the little man's back seemed to fascinate him more than ever.

"You're a stranger to these parts, then?"

"Yes. Quite. I'm just making a little tour, taking it very gently. My scorching days are over!"

The landlord stepped out of the bar and disappeared.

The little man's eyes twinkled merrily, as though his sense of humour had been tickled.

A few moments later, an ostler hurried away from the back of the inn towards the police-station. Presently he returned, accompanied by two policemen.

The landlord, a look of suppressed excitement on his face, had returned to the bar.

There was a sudden hush as the two constables entered quickly.

The only person who seemed concerned was the little man. His face was buried in a pewter mug. His eyes were twinkling like stars.

The landlord winked at the constables and indicated the little man with a jerk of his thumb.

One of the constables, a thrapping young fellow, with an open, ingenuous countenance, tapped the little man on the shoulder. He put down the pewter and turned. The homely face lit up all over with a look of unexpected delight.

"Freddie!" he cried. "Well I never! So they've drafted you down here!"

"Uncle!" cried the young constable; then laughed loudly. He turned round to the landlord, who was looking rather sheepish.

"Goodman," he said, "you've made a mistake this time. Do you know who this suspicious person is?"

"No!" stammered the landlord.

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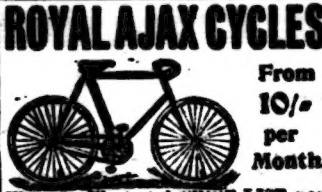
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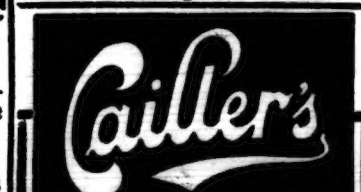
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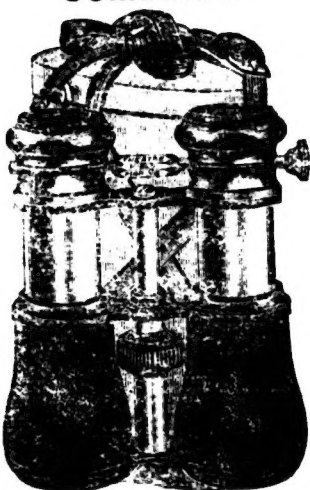
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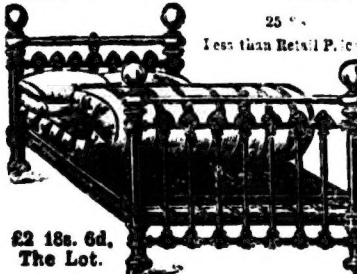
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